Narayaneeyam

BHAGAVATA CONDENSED

In the thousand thirty-six exquisite Sanskrit verses comprising this poetical hymn known as the *Narayaneeyam*, Narayana Bhattatiri, a versatile scholar, philosopher, poet and devotee of the 16th century, gives a masterly summary of the subject matter dealt with in the eighteen thousand verses of the famous Bhakti Text, the *Bhagavata Purana*.

A close study of this work will help one gain an insight into the authentic Bhakti traditions of India in a short compass. Besides being a comprehensive Bhakti Text, the book is noted for the fascinating way in which it portrays the life and achievements of Sri Krishna, the unique Incarnation.

Among the devotees of the Krishna cult, the Text of the *Narayaneeyam* is looked upon as sacred, having the power of a Mantra like the *Devimahatmya* and similar Texts, and is studied daily as a part of their devotional practices. The belief is that as the author Bhattatiri attained to 'longevity, health and happiness' through its composition, so will a person reading it with faith and devotion attain to these highly coveted values, and have the grace and protection of the Lord in all difficult situations of life.

The Sanskrit Text, a lucid English translation, adequate Notes on doctrinal points, and an elaborate Introduction giving an account of the author, a critical estimate of the contents of the Text and an exposition of the philosophy of Bhakti, and Appendices giving very interesting anecdotes about the devotee-poet Narayana Bhattatiri and the temple of Guruvayoor—form the important features of the book.

NARAYANEEYAM

BHAGAVATA CONDENSED

BY

MEPPATHUR NARAYANA BHATTATIRI

TRANSLATED

BY

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PREFACE

The present edition of the *Narayaneeyam* aims at giving a lucid and readable translation of this great Sanskrit Text to the English reading public interested in Indian devotional literature. While the translation is 'free,' it is never unfaithful to the original. It is based on the edition of the Text by two very competent Sanskrit scholars, Sri P.S. Anantanarayana Sastri and Sri Vatakumkur Raja Raja Varma, published in Malayalam script with a commentary.

The details given in the Introduction and Appendices concerning the life and works of the author Narayana Bhattatiri and the anecdotes about him and the temple of Guruvayoor have been gathered from several Malayalam periodicals, chiefly from the writings of Profs. K. Kunhunni Raja, C. G. Nair, M.G.S. Narayanan, P. C. Vasudevan Elayath, V. S. Sarma and K. Vasudevan Moozad. Though none can vouch for the historical accuracy of much of these materials, they are in a sense of greater interest than the dry details of history, as they give us a deep insight into the versatility of the great mind we are contacting through this poetical hymn.

The notes are strictly confined to doctrinal points, and much of the Introduction, especially the section on the *Bhagavata*, is meant to supplement these. As the *Narayaneeyam* is a condensation of the *Bhagavata Purana*, a grasp of the specific Bhakti doctrine of the *Bhagavata* is very essential for the proper understanding of the *Narayaneeyam*, especially of the Krishna episode forming its core. The reader is therefore advised to make a close study of the Introduction.

The use of hyphens in the Text is meant to facilitate reading and has no significance beyond that.

It is hoped that this translation of the *Narayaneeyam* into a world language like English will attract the attention of a wide public to this great Text and through it, to the great Bhakti tradition of India.

PUBLISHER.

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INTRODUCTION

I

The Author

THE *Narayaneeyam* is a text that takes a high place in Sanskrit literature both as a poem and as a devotional hymn. This double role is responsible for the great popularity it has attained wherever it has come to be known. As its author was a poet-devotee hailing from Kerala, and as it was traditionally connected with the great Krishna Temple at Guruvayoor in that State, its popularity was, till the beginning of this century, confined mostly to that part of the country; but since then it has come to be known all over South India, and editions of it with translation and comments in different languages have appeared. It is only a question of time before it gains recognition in all the Sanskrit-knowing world on a par with great hymns like the *Chandi*, the *Saundaryalahari*, the *Sivanandalahari* etc., on the one hand, and with the great Kavyas of poets like Kalidasa on the other.

The author of this great Text, Meppathur Narayana Bhattatiri, was a Nampudiri Brahmana of Kerala, whose date of birth, according to the latest view expressed by Dr. Kunhunni Raja, Professor of Sanskrit in the Madras University, is 1560 A.D. The site of his home, Meppathur Illam, situated on the northern side of the Bharata river about two miles away from the great temple of Tirunavay in Ponnani Taluq of Kerala, can still be identified, although the family became extinct long ago. As can be gathered from his grammatical work the *Prakriya-sarvasva*, his father was Matridatta 'devoted to Dharma and an adept in Bhatta Mimamsa (Vedic ritualistic philosophy according to Kumarila Bhatta) and other Tantras (ritualistic lore).' Bhattatiri studied these Sastras from his own father, while he studied the Veda from one Madhavacharya and Logic from one Damodararya. The identities of these two cannot now be ascertained. Grammar, of which he had special mastery, was taught to him by one Achyutarya, who is identified as Trikandiyur Achyuta Pisharady, a celebrated grammarian of those times. Tradition has it that Bhattatiri in his early days was both a prodigy and a profligate. While

the former is a fact, the latter is only a popular ascription to dramatize his later devotional developments. By about sixteen, the prodigy is said to have mastered all learning. He is also said to have been leading a morally indifferent life, from which he was shaken and put on right lines by the sharp reprimand of his grammarian teacher Achyuta Pisharady, whom he seems to have admired and respected very much. A few years after, Achyuta Pisharady fell a victim to paralysis. Bhattatiri attended on his great master and, according to tradition, he took upon himself the ailment of his teacher and became a paralytic himself. He asked himself to be carried to the temple of Guruvayoor where he could take shelter at the feet of Lord Krishna and get His divine intervention. As his malady continued, he sent a messenger to the great devotee-poet of Kerala, Thunchath Ezhuthatchan, for advice. He got the reply that he should 'start with the fish'. Bhattatiri was quick to understand the implication of the reply—*viz.* that he should compose a hymn in praise of the Lord, giving an account of all His Leelavataras (Incarnations), beginning with the Incarnation as Fish. So sitting in the precincts of the temple of Guruvayoor, he started composing the *Narayaneeyam*, a marvellous epitome of the *Bhagavata Purana* in 1036 verses, dealing with the Lord's principal Incarnations and portraying His manifold excellences and creative activity.[1] As stated in the hymn itself, he completed it on 27th November 1587 (Vrischikam 28th of the year 763 of Kollam Era), the hundredth day after he began composing. At the end of it, he had complete recovery. He completed the *Narayaneeyam* in his 27th year and according to certain traditions, lived up to the unusual age of 106. Bhattatiri's is thus one more instance, among several others, of how a great man's sufferings can result in much good to the world; for, had it not been for his crippling ailment, he might not have given to the world this wonderful devotional poem that has gone to enrich the life of several generations of devotees.

The main facts of his life in relation to the *Narayaneeyam* are clear from these traditions, but the date of his demise is disputed. Beyond a statement in the temple traditions of Aranmula, written two hundred years after the event, there is no evidence for the view that he lived up to the unusual age of 106. So the best thing, as Professor K. Kunhunni Raja

[1] For an account of the temple of Guruvayoor and for several anecdotes connected with Bhattatiri's life there, reference may be made to Appendices I and II.

holds, is to leave the question open with 1655 as the latest date. It is certain that he was alive in 1624, as he is known to have attended at the death-bed of his Master Achyuta Pisharady that year. Bhattatiri began his work on grammar the *Prakriya-sarvasva* in 1617 (at the mature age of fifty seven) according to internal evidence from the work. When exactly he started his Mimamsa work called the *Mana-meyodaya* (Proofs and Categories) is not, however, known. It might be later than his grammar work. Though he intended, as stated in the work, to write on both the topics dealt with in the book, he could complete only its first part on Mana (Proofs) but could not take up the second part on Meya (Categories). It was completed in about 1655 by another scholar named Narayana. No satisfactory reason can be given for this except that Bhattatiri must have died several years before this date (1655), leaving the *Manameyodaya* incomplete. That his devotional preoccupation must have alienated him from concern with Mimamsa, looks a very far-fetched assumption as an explanation, seeing that after writing his chief devotional work, the *Narayaneeyam*, at the age of twenty seven (in 1587), he had interest enough in secular studies to produce works on Mimamsa, Grammar and even Panegyrics up to his fifty seventh year at least (*i.e.* 1617, the date of his commencing the *Prakriya-sarvasva*). So, it is best to assume that Bhattatiri passed away several years before 1655.

Though Bhattatiri is today famous for his *Narayaneeyam*, a devotional work, his achievements in the field of scholarship and his fame among his contemporaries, both within Kerala and outside, had a much broader basis. The various chieftains of Kerala vied with one another in extending their patronage to this erudite poet. Outstanding among them were the Zamorin Manavikrama, Godavarma Raja of Vatakumkur, Veera-Kerala Varma Raja of Cochin (1600–1614), and Raja Devanarayana of Ambalapuzha (1566–1623). To all of them he had offered poems of felicitation called Prasastis (Panegyrics), for which he must have received honour and rich presents. After he wrote his grammatical work *Prakriya-sarvasva*, his fame spread outside Kerala also. The noted grammarian, Bhattoji Dikshita, the author of the *Siddhanta Kaumudi*, is said to have actually started on a journey to Kerala to meet him, but had to give up the idea, as the news of Bhattatiri's passing away reached him. Bhattatiri had correspondence with some of the leading grammarians of the Chola country

like Someswara Dikshita and Yajna-narayana Dikshita, of whom the latter was a minister of the king of Tanjavur (from 1614 to 1633) and was the author of the well-known work the *Sahitya-ratnakara*. Bhattatiri was invited to Tanjavur but could not go for reasons of health. He had also a very large number of eminent disciples in Kerala who themselves became authors of literary and technical works afterwards. He seems to have commanded the deepest respect of them all for his lofty devotion and all-round learning. One of them, Narayana Pandita, describes him as one with supreme mastery of Purva-mimamsa and Uttara-mimamsa (Vedanta). Another scholar-disciple named Chandrasekhara calls him 'a peer of sages like Suka and Narada in devotion to the Supreme Being, an encyclopaedic scholar, and a divinely gifted author of great works like the *Prakriya-sarvasva*.' So Bhattatiri lived a long life, rich in devotion, rich in literary creation, rich in honours, and rich in admirers and disciples.

II

Works

He is the author of many works, numbering about forty, major and minor. They can be classified into the following groups: (1) Sastric or technical works (2) Prabandhas or narratives (3) Prasastis or panegyrics (4) Stotras or devotional hymns.

Among his Sastric works, the best known are on grammar. These include three books (1) the *Prakriya-sarvasva* (2) the *Apaniniya-pramana* and (3) the *Dhatu-Kavya*. The first of these, the *Prakriya-sarvasva*, is a work similar to the *Siddhanta-Kaumudi*, but it was written a little earlier or independently of it, and is considered a more lucid and clearer exposition than the latter. It gives an exposition of Panini's Sutras. But Bhattatiri was a liberalist in his views and maintained that in ascertaining the grammatical correctness of words, Panini, Katyayana and Patanjali were not the sole authorities, and that Kasika-Kara, Bhoja, Murari and great literary men like Bhavabhuti also should be considered as authoritative. He has pursued the subject in his smaller book, the *Apaniniya-pramana*, and sought to justify many words and forms foreign to Panini, on the basis of usage. His third grammatical work the *Dhatu-Kavya* gives,

in the form of a poem on Sri Krishna's life, the illustration of the Dhatus or grammatical roots in Sanskrit. A difficult subject is herein made easy for the Sanskrit student to commit to memory.

The other technical subject he dealt with was Purva-mimamsa. His work on this subject, called the *Mana-meyodaya*, deals with the epistemology (Mana) and the categories (Meya) of the Bhatta school of Mimamsa. Though, as stated in the text itself, he wanted to write on both the Mana and the Meya sections of the book, he could complete only the former. The second section was completed by another Narayanasuri in 1655, most probably because Bhattatiri had died some years earlier, leaving the work incomplete.

Among his non-technical works, are first his Prabandhas or narrative writings, which constitute the majority of his writings. These are compositions in Sanskrit, often in Champu style (a style in which prose and poetry are mingled), on episodes from the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the *Bhagavata*, which provided the text (Sahitya) for temple artistes like Chakiars to give their discourses and expositions. About thirty or more works of this kind, many of them short, are mentioned, and have been in use among Chakiars. The expositions of the Chakiars were meant for the instruction of the masses in ethical and devotional matters. Through these writings, Bhattatiri has contributed much to the religious education of the common man in his part of the country.

Another class of his writings is called the Prasastis or panegyrics. All scholars and poets had to depend on kings and aristocrats in those days. Till printing and general education came into vogue, and a general reading public came into existence, kings and aristocrats were the only paying patrons everywhere. So Bhattatiri also had to devote his Muse occasionally for the gratification of kings, in spite of his expressed views against it in the *Narayaneeyam* (c. 99, v. 3). There are four such Prasastis which he produced at different times in praise of his royal patrons—Veera-Kerala Varma of Cochin, Godavarma of Vatakumkur, the Zamorin Manavikrama of Kozhikode, and Deva-Narayana of Ambalapuzha.

But his most noteworthy contribution, which has gained him immortality, is to Sanskrit hymnology. He has three such writings—the *Sree-pada-saptati* on the Divine Mother, the *Guruvayupura-stotra*, a short poem on Krishna, and above all the *Narayaneeyam*, his *magnum opus*.

III

The Narayaneeyam

The *Narayaneeyam* is undoubtedly the major work of Bhattatiri, for which he is remembered today by scholars as well as devotees. The work is known by this particular name for two reasons—one, that it deals with the glories of Narayana, the Supreme Being who is the resting place (Ayanam) of all Jivas (Naras), and the other, that it is the composition by the poet Narayana. It is a work consisting of 1036 verses in various Sanskrit metres, divided into one hundred cantos of approximately ten verses each, every canto ending with a prayer to the Lord to cure the poet of his crippling ailment. It is a unique work in the Sanskrit language in so far as it combines in itself three distinct features: (*a*) It is a literary masterpiece, a great poetical work (Kavya), comparable to the compositions of any of the classical Sanskrit poets. (*b*) It is a hymn of rare devotional fervour having several distinctive features shared by no other hymn. (*c*) It is an exposition of Vedanta with a dominance of devotional teachings. Short remarks on these three aspects of the text are given below:

(1) As a Kavya: The *Narayaneeyam* has all the features of a Kavya or a great poem. A Kavya must have an ultimate objective in view, some great didactic purpose as a rule, for ennobling the life of man. It must have a unified theme, an elevated subject matter suited for the achievement of this objective, put in a form that is as attractive as it is instructive. It must have in it sufficient scope for the expression of a variety of human sentiments, emotional experiences and beauties of Nature, and these have to be depicted artistically with a sense of proportion and propriety. It must necessarily be a piece of literary artistry. An adequate vocabulary, felicity and force of expression, suggestiveness, modulation of style according to the theme or situation, use of words that echo the sense, abundance of figures of speech and stylistic devices like Anuprasa, Yamaka etc., command of various metres suited to the sentiments dealt with—these are some of the elements of literary craftsmanship that constitute a truly great Kavya. From all these points of view the *Narayaneeyam* will be found satisfactory by any literary critic. Its purpose is the salvation of man, the most significant of all Purusharthas (values of life), and its theme, the whole subject

matter of the *Bhagavata Purana.* The master sentiment it depicts is Bhakti or God-love. There were literary critics who would not recognize devotion as a fitting sentiment for a Kavya, but a great authority on poetics like Jagannatha Pandita has accorded it a place among the valid poetic sentiments. While dealing with Bhakti, Bhattatiri has brought within the ambit of his poesy all the well-recognized human sentiments like the heroic, the erotic, the terrible, the sublime, the pathetic etc. His theme, the *Bhagavata*, especially the life of Sri Krishna, which forms fifty-two of the one hundred cantos of the *Narayaneeyam*, gives adequate scope for the expression of all such sentiments.

Among these, the sentiment of pity, however, has a subtle but dominating place in the work even as Bhakti itself. The pathetic sentiment permeating the work is not the product of mere poetic imagination but born of the ' lived experience ' of the poet. Generally a poet conveys emotional experiences through ' imaginary identification ' with his theme or characters. But here, in respect of the sentiment of ' pity', the author himself, his predicament in life, is the source of it. A talented young man, crippled by disease into an absolutely helpless state, takes refuge at the feet of the Lord as a suppliant. He bemoans his fate for a time in the verses of the first three cantos, surcharged as much with pathetic grief as with suppliant devotion. And then he feels that there is no use of wasting his time in bewailing his lot, and that it will be more useful to occupy himself entirely with the narration of the majesty, power, love and other excellences of the Lord in His creative activity and in His Leelavataras (Incarnations). But in the course of his narration he reverts, at the end of every canto, to his tragic predicament and ends with a prayer for relief. There are critics of the *Narayaneeyam* who consider this recurring reference to the poet's tragic situation at the end of every canto as a defect in the work. This criticism is made from the standpoint of the Bhakti doctrine, that in the highest type of devotion, there is no place for petitioning the Lord for favours. Whatever this might be from the Bhakti standpoint, it is little realized by such critics that it is this pathetic background that enhances the human worth of the work, and makes it not only a great hymn but a great poem as well. In fact the sense of pathos percolates, whether visibly or invisibly, through the verses of this text, and mixing with its evident devotional sentiment, generates the emotional blend which gives the *Narayaneeyam* its peculiar charm.

A master of the Sanskrit language, especially of its grammar, as Bhattatiri was, his literary artistry and felicity of expression are evident all through the work. Words follow thoughts with a naturalness that fills the reader with a sense of their adequacy and appropriateness. His descriptions of nature, seasons, landscape etc., which must necessarily find a place in a Sanskrit Kavya, are brief and simple, but for that reason most effective and enchantingly poetic compared to the spun out, highly ornate and artificial descriptions in many a celebrated Sanskrit poetical work (Cf. c. 49, 58 & 63). Bhattatiri is noted for his capacity to expound his theme with brevity, beauty and effectiveness. In epitomizing and in taking a rapid survey of events, he has his own unrivalled technique, but for which he could not have compressed the matter dealt with in the *Bhagavata* in eighteen thousand verses into a work of one thousand and thirty six stanzas of exquisite beauty. While many of the episodes described in it like the life of Sri Krishna provide excellent themes for a poetic work—and the author has concentrated on them—there are several others which, by their very nature, are dull and prosaic, and would have remained so in lesser hands. Among such topics may be mentioned accounts of creation, genealogies, descriptions of continents, rapid surveys of events and philosophical disquisitions. Even in handling such themes not eminently suited for poetry, Bhattatiri has given his composition a poetic effect by the beauty of his diction, by the proper choice of metres, and by the sublimity and the devotional fervour he infuses into the exposition. The most conspicuous example of this aspect of his literary artistry is to be found in the last nine cantos dealing with abstract philosophical doctrines, which cannot be poetic in themselves, whatever else they may be. But in Bhattatiri's hand the profundity of their wisdom becomes enriched by the graces of literary beauty, the magnificence of the Sanskrit metres he employs, and the intensity of feeling he imparts to his verses.

His mastery of literary artistry expresses itself in the most striking manner when he employs the device of making the sound echo the sense. In this he is very much assisted by the great wealth of metres that Sanskrit poetics provides and the liberality and appropriateness with which he has employed them for producing rhetorical and poetic effect. Outstanding examples of this are his descriptions of the Nrisimha (Man-lion) Incarnation (c. 25), and of the Rasa-Lila in the

Krishna episode (c. 69). In the former the rugged and resounding expressions, together with the stirring metres employed, invoke the picture of the mysterious and the tremendous even by their sheer sound effect, while in the description of Rasa–Lila the musical word-combinations together with the rhythmic metres employed waft one up to the summits of devotion through a highly sublimated eroticism. The Kaliya episode (c. 56) is another striking example, and verses of the *Narayaneeyam* depicting it have become the theme for dance recitals by talented artistes. Considered in this way, most of the cantos have their own specific literary excellence.

Bhattatiri's mastery of poetic devices for creating sound effects through Anuprasa, Yamaka etc., and his capacity to make effective use of figures of speech, euphemisms, puns, witticisms etc., though evident all over, are prominently displayed in four cantos (70, 71, 78, 79). But he uses these devices sparingly and with great restraint, probably realizing that a hymn like the one he was composing should prove its effectiveness more through fervour and effortless poetic grace than through highly artificial embellishments of literary artistry. Regarding metres, however, he has made full use of their abundant supply provided in Sanskrit poetics, having employed eighteen out of twenty metres in active use among poets. The quick change from one attractive metre to another at the end of groups of ten verses has helped immensly in warding off tediousness, in giving a sense of freshness, and in enhancing the poetic effects of narratives and descriptions. The depicition of the Sri Krishna Incarnation, especially the portion dealt with in the cantos thirty seven to seventy six, constitutes the most artistic core of the work, and the reader is led to feel sometimes that this abridged restatement of the *Narayaneeyam* is not in any way inferior to the *Bhagavata* itself in its poetic effect and devotional impact.

(2) As a Hymn: Among the Sanskrit hymns the *Narayaneeyam* is unique in many respects. It is perhaps the longest hymn in Sanskrit. While many Sanskrit hymns are highly poetical, none of them shares all the features of a Kavya as the *Narayaneeyam* does. Beyond praising the excellences of the Lord, describing His form and making stray references to His love of devotees and bestowal of grace on them, they generally contain no unified theme, whereas the *Narayaneeyam* has an elaborate theme, consisting of the

whole subject matter of the *Bhagavata Purana* as mentioned already. The *Bhagavata* itself is in the form of conversations between several sages and disciples, wherein are set forth descriptions of cosmic processes, the history of world systems, the doings of saintly kings, the works and excellences of various Divine Incarnations etc. interspersed everywhere with great devotional hymns and expositions of the Vedantic and devotional doctrines. The subject matter of this extensive literature of eighteen thousand verses is epitomized and re-cast in the *Narayaneeyam* into one thousand thirty-six verses, wrought into a hymn of praise, wherein almost every verse is directly addressed to the Lord as a fervent prayer and as an exposition of His divine glory and excellences. It is very doubtful whether any other poet in Sanskrit has accomplished so stupendous a task. The devotional excellence of the work and its intimate relationship with the *Bhagavata Purana* have won for it in many parts of India a place among the daily Parayanagranthas (texts for daily ceremonial reading) like the *Gita*, the *Devimahatmya* and others.

To what extent is the devotion of the author consistent with the Bhagavata doctrine of Bhakti? The question arises because at the end of every canto of ten verses, there is a prayer for the cure of the author's physical ailment, and thus it may seem to militate against the idea that a devotee of the highest order never asks for any favour of the Lord, but is simply satisfied with serving Him with body, mind and soul. In considering this question, it has to be remembered that according to the *Gita*, devotees are of four kinds—the distressed, the enquirers, those seeking fulfilment of an object and the men of knowledge (Jnani). All these are reckoned as noble, but the Jnani is the devotee *par excellence*. Bhattatiri was a devotee of the first kind to start with, one in utter distress caused by his incurable disease. But he shows in the course of the work, in verse after verse, that his only object in praying for relief from pain, was that he might afterwards devote all his mental energies without any distraction to the practice of whole-hearted devotion to the Lord (c. 40 v. 10; c. 92 v. 7; c. 93 v. 9 & 10; c. 97 v. 10 etc.). In fact his disease marks the point of his conversion, and on this he touchingly remarks in verse 8 canto 93 that his body with its incurable ailment was the greatest of his teachers, because it was responsible for driving him to seek shelter in the Lord. At the end of canto after canto he pleads with the Lord to make him a devotee mad with Divine love, going

about the world like Suka and Narada preaching the message of Bhakti (c. 4, v. 8). The ring of passionate God-love rises above the tragic situation of the poet in the verses of the *Narayaneeyam* everywhere, and when one reads in verse 6 canto 74, of the poet bemoaning his fate for not being in the crowds that greeted Krishna as he walked along the high road of Mathura, carrying in his hand at least a few fruits and betel to present to the Lord, no reader can help being thrilled by the intensity of the poet's devotional exuberance. It is a fitting reward to the poet-devotee's service of the Lord through this great hymn of praise that he was blessed at the end with the vision of the Lord described in the thrilling language of a devotional lyric in the concluding canto of the work.

(3) THE PHILOSOPHICAL OUTLOOK OF NARAYANEEYAM: It is not only the narratives of the *Bhagavata* that are summarised in the *Narayaneeyam* but also its philosophical and devotional teachings. The teachings of the *Bhagavata* on these subjects are scattered wide over the text in its various dialogues and hymns of praise with which that great work abounds. The teachings given by Kapila to his mother Devahuti and by Sri Krishna to Uddhava in Book III and XI respectively of the *Bhagavata* constitute the most important philosophical dissertations in that work. The essential points are selectively gleaned out of all these and put in magnificent verses in the first four and the last eight cantos of the *Narayaneeyam* wherein philosophy has been transformed into poetry by Bhattatiri's genius.

Though by up-bringing Bhattatiri was a Bhatta-mimamsaka (follower of Vedic ritualistic philosophy), he shows himself to be an ardent Vaishnava in his theology and an Advaitin in his philosophy. Lord Vishnu (who is identical with Krishna) is depicted, as in the *Bhagavata*, to be not a conception of God but the very God, of whom all other Deities are expressions. This is elaborately argued in cantos 89 and 90. But in his metaphysics he goes all the way with Sankara's Advaitism and upholds the doctrine of the Impersonal Absolute (Nirvisesha Brahman), from whom the individual soul is non-different. This unity with the Impersonal Absolute, according to the strict Advaita doctrine, is attained only through the sublation of the world, the individual self and Iswara, whose common substratum is the Absolute. Devotion to God is valued in this doctrine only as a base camp to be abandoned as early as possible. Its function is purification of the mind,

and once that is achieved, the Jnana discipline of philosophical reflection for dissolving duality is to be adopted.

Devotional philosophy, however, recognizes Bhakti not merely as a means but as the end also. Not dissolution in Brahman, but service of the Supreme Personal-Impersonal Being in various forms of loving relationship—of servant and master, child and parent, friend and companion, or wife and husband—is the goal of devotion. Whether such a way of life is compatible with the pure monistic philosophy is doubtful; but there have been great saintly thinkers like Madhusudana Saraswati who have found no incompatibility in such reconciliation. Madhusudana maintains that while the Dvaita that precedes awakening into the truth of Non-duality is born of ignorance, the duality that is *assumed* after this awakening for purposes of devotion, is sweeter than pure Advaita consciousness. That it is sweeter is acceptable to devotional schools but that their doctrine is a mere *ascription* or *make-believe* will be disputed by them.

Bhattatiri's position on this question seems to be somewhat ambiguous. While in many places he expounds the idealistic Non-dualism of Kevaladvaita in a thorough-going fashion (c.94; 95, 98 etc.) he is convinced of its uselessness as far as he is concerned (c.94 v.6), and he is not prepared to call the God of love as only an appearance and devotional relations as mere ascriptions. He admits in many places that Bhakti is the only practicable way of spiritual practice and that it is a self-sufficient discipline (c.94 v.6–10). All other paths are difficult to practise, or too distant in their results, or they endanger man's spiritual life by bogging him in pure ritualism or intellectualism (c.94 v.10; c.96 v.6). The body and the sense of ego stand as insuperable obstacles in the path of Jnana. Bhakti, on the other hand, is sweet, natural, introduces the new energy of Suddhasattva in overcoming the pull of the Gunas of Prakriti, and above all opens the way for the operation of Divine grace, by which alone Non-dual Consciousness can be gained (c.96 v.6 & 7).

But he does not give any conclusive answer to the question whether Bhakti is only a means or is also an end in itself. He is prepared to admit that Bhakti is equal to Mukti (c.77, v.11) but does not seem to go all the way with the *Bhagavata* which states, with reference to Sri Krishna's services to the Pandavas, that Bhakti is superior to Mukti and that the Lord bestows Mukti to many but Bhakti only to a blessed few (Bh. 5.6.18). Bhaktas of the highest order do not seek mergence

in Brahman, which is called Brahmananda; they prefer to lose themselves in eternal service of the Personal-Impersonal God of love and the Bhajanananda accompanying it.

Bhakti of this type which looks upon itself as the highest end, and not merely as a secondary means, can be supported only on the basis of the philosophical position of Achintya-bhedabheda. Achintya-bhedabheda differs from Kevaladvaita in two essential respects: (1) According to it Reality is both Personal (Saguna) and Impersonal (Nirguna). Fundamentally it is Personal, but it has an Impersonal aspect too. The personal Bhagavan reveals this aspect of His, *viz.* the Impersonal Brahman, to those who prefer bodiless dissolution in it. But His fundamental nature as Ananda (Bliss) is realized only through maintaining personal relationship with Him, and this is a higher consummation than Mukti. Therefore in this way of thought either Bhakti as eternal service of the Lord or Mukti as mergence in His Impersonal nature, becomes available according to the aspirant's bent of mind. (2) Reality is simultaneously non-dual (Abheda) and multiple (Bheda). Multiplicity is the projections of the Shakti (Power) of the Non-dual Reality, the Bhagavan. Shakti and its possessor or Shaktimat are inseparably one (non-dual), just as fire and its burning power are one. Yet they are different also, just as the burning power of the fire can be distinguished from fire. In this conception of relationship, the non-duality of the Supreme Being is secured in spite of His projection as the many through His Shakti. Also as the projection is of the Shakti, the Bhagavan is not affected in any manner. It is the inconceivable uniqueness (Achintyata) of the Bhagavan, that unlike relative causes of the world, He can be the many through His Shakti but yet be unchanged and unaffected in the least by it. Change or manifestation here is real unlike in Kevaladvaita, though it does not affect the Bhagavan. Consequently bondage and salvation are real, and the Bhagavan too is real and can never be sublated, as in Kevaladvaita.

Reading between the lines of the *Narayaneeyam*, one is likely to feel that Bhattatiri's heart is more for Bhakti as eternal service than for the Moksha of dissolution in Brahman. But what exactly his final metaphysical position is, it is difficult to pin-point, because in the last nine cantos of the work he seems to approve of all forms of monism and theism known to Indian thinkers. It looks, however, that the traditional hold of the Sankara School of Kevaladvaita was very strong on his

intellect, in spite of his perception of its inadequacy and impracticality as far as he and most spiritual aspirants are concerned. He, therefore, makes frequent excursions into the intellectualism of this school, but immediately after, finding its bleak precipices too inhospitable for himself and allied spirits, withdraws into the warm and secure mansions of Bhakti, the adoring love and service of the Divine Person, and loses himself in the ecstatic joy of it (see cantos 96 and 97). Abandoning the idealistic Advaitism of Kevaladvaita, he then expounds the realistic Advaitism of Achintya-Bhedabheda (without however mentioning this name or awareness of it), in which non-difference and difference, the Impersonal and the Personal have an equal place. In canto 7, verse 9 he puts into the mouth of Brahma the Creator, the prayer for an understanding of the real nature of the Lord as Dvaita-advaita, that is, as one who harmonises in Himself both unity and multiplicity. No such question as positing apparency for multiplicity is raised here. He also speaks of the Divine form, of which he had a vision, and which he describes vividly in the last canto, as the wavy surface of the Ocean of Satchidananda (c.1 v.4; c.99 v.10). The wave-ocean continuum is a very familiar example employed in Bhedabheda as the illustration of the Non-dual Satchidananda manifesting as the many in a real sense without any diminution of Its integrity and spiritual excellence. In canto 99, verse 9 he makes prostrations to the Deity, the Being who manifests Himself as the Becoming (the world of the many) by an insignificant part of Himself and transcends it by three-fourths of Himself. Unaffected in the least by His real manifestation as the world, He remains as the infinite and uncontaminated Spirit.

In the Kevaladvaita of Sankara all these manifestations of Divine creative activity and Iswara Himself are Mithya, appearances only, which means they never have been really existent. They are only appearances conjured up through ignorance. But in the *Narayaneeyam* it is nowhere said that God is also sublatable like the ego and the universe. The 'I' gets merged in the Universal Spirit and not vice versa. This is clearly expressed in a well-known verse thus: 'When differences are effaced, it is I that become merged as a part of Thine and not Thou that dost become merged in me. The wave is of the ocean, and not the ocean of the wave.'

Bhattatiri seems to uphold only such a realistic Advaita, in which, even if bodilessness and mergence in the Supreme Spirit form the ideal, there is no such idea as sublating the

Bhagavan. It is by the Bhagavan's grace alone that non-dual consciousness is got. The devotee merges in His being by His grace and not sublates Him. The 'I' disappears in Him, and He alone is left and not vice versa. Devotional Advaitism has necessarily got to be realistic and not solipsistic. The full metaphysical implication of accepting Bhakti as the fifth Purushartha, superior even to Mukti, which forms the unique feature of the *Bhagavata*, is articulated only hesitatingly in the *Narayaneeyam*, in spite of the author's leaning towards it.

IV

The Bhagavata: A Perspective of Its Contents

Since the *Narayaneeyam* is a condensed version of the *Bhagavata*, an understanding of the former will be helped by a general consideration of the *Bhagavata* and its subject matter. The *Bhagavata*, which received its present textual shape between the 6th and the 8th century A.D. according to the latest pronouncements of modern scholarship, is considered one of the eighteen Mahapuranas, and is today the most widely accepted religious literature of its kind. A Mahapurana is expected to deal with the following ten topics according to the *Bhagavata* itself (12. 7. 9–10): (1) Sarga or Primary Creation: It is the evolution of undifferentiated Prakriti (Nature or Root Matter) into the twenty-four categories ending with gross material elements (cf. canto 6 and note 7). (2) Visarga or Secondary Creation: This consists in the latent tendencies of creatures becoming manifest, as when trees come out of seeds. As a result, all embodied beings, sentient and insentient, get formed by the combination of the categories evolved out of Prakriti, through the creative activity of Brahma (cf. cantos 7 to 10 and notes 6 and 8). (3) Vritti or Means of Sustenance: It is the description of the system by which the more evolved beings are ordained to subsist on less evolved species as prompted by Nature and set forth in scriptures. Sometimes the subject of Sthana or Residence for creatures is also brought under this subject. In elaboration of it, descriptions are given of the various regions of the earth with their diverse physical features, inhabitants and forms of worship, as also of heavenly and nether regions providing abode for various kinds of super-

human beings. (4) Raksha or Protection: It includes the accounts of all the Incarnations of the Lord in various species of beings, wherein His sportive deeds for the establishment of spirituality and the salvation of devotees are described besides his bestowal of unconditioned grace even on unworthy men. For this reason, this subject includes also what is called Poshana or rejuvenation of spiritually dead persons through unconditioned grace. (5) Manvantara or Epoch of Manus consists in the description of the combined activities of Manus, Devas, sons of Manus, Indra, Rishis and highly evolved souls for the promotion of life and the well-being of all creatures. (6) Vamsa or Genealogy gives descriptive lists and achievements of great royal and priestly lines descended from Brahma. (7) Vamsanucharita or Dynastic History deals with rule of distinguished kings and their dynasties that served the cause of devotion to God and well-being of the Universe. (8) Samstha or Dissolution is the description of the three kinds of dissolution of the manifested universe into finer condition brought about by the influence of Time, Karma, and Gunas. These dissolutions or Pralayas are: the total dissolution of the manifested universe (Prakrita-pralaya), partial destruction due to some special cause (Naimittika-pralaya), and daily dissolution in sleep (Nitya-pralaya). The salvation of man, which implies the dissolution (Pralaya) of all his gross and subtle bodies, also comes within this topic. It is called Atyantika-pralaya (cf. note 6). (9) Hetu or Purpose is the discussion of the root cause and significance of all creative activity. It is Jiva (individual soul), the product of Avidya (ignorance) and its ensuing effects of desire and Karma. All creative activity is to confer on Jivas the fruits of their Karmas and ultimately redeem them from ignorance and rebirth. So subjects like the nature of the Jiva, the ways of his redemption, the purpose of creation etc. will come under this topic. (10) Apasraya or Ultimate Support: This is God who is the ultimate Being and the Support of all relative supports. In Him and by His will all the above-mentioned events and processes of the relative world take place. It is to bring man to an adequate conception of His excellences and generate in him devotion to the Lord, that all other themes mentioned before are discussed in the Puranas. There will be found scattered all over the Puranas considerable matter relating to history, geography, astronomy, natural sciences, sociology etc. as understood in ancient days. The object of such accounts is not to teach these subjects as such like modern

text books on them, but to engender in us a feeling that all functioning of Nature and of human and divine agencies is to proclaim the glory of the Supreme Being and thus generate in us a sense of His omnipotence, omniscience and redeeming love. So all the accounts given in the Puranas, including the apparently non-devotional topics, converge on this great theme of Apasraya, the Supreme Being who is the ultimate support of everything.

While much of the Vedanta philosophy finds its place in the Puranas, it is mostly its devotional aspect, with highly personalised conceptions of the Deity, that is highlighted in all of them. Generally they are based on any one of the three cults—the cult of Siva, the cult of Vishnu, and the cult of the Divine Mother. The cult Deity is exalted as the Supreme Personal-Impersonal Being of the Vedanta. He is vivified into a very tangible reality with a plethora of descriptive details about Him—His form, decorations, weapons, associates, heavenly abode, its denizens and the like. Through evocative hymns and through vivid and poetic narratives concerning His cosmic activities and the workings of His redemptive grace, the cult Deity and His Incarnations are made more graphic and real to a votary than any historical personalities of the past who are nothing but shadowy figures of bygone ages. He is apprehended through the pages of the Puranas as the eternally living spiritual Person with whom one can commune and whose grace one can pray for and obtain.

The *Bhagavata* for its part is a Vaishnava text and as such exalts Maha-Vishnu as the Supreme Being (cf. canto 89 and 90 of the *Narayaneeyam*). While it deals elaborately with all the topics common to Puranic literature cited earlier, it concerns itself specifically with some themes of Vaishnava theology like the various kinds of Divine manifestations—the three Gunavataras known as Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara, the four Vyuhavataras known as Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha and the score of Leelavataras or sportive divine Descents among men and other species of beings, of which the Incarnation as Sri Krishna dominates its narrative. Of the eighteen thousand verses of the *Bhagavata*, about fifty per cent deals either directly or indirectly with the Krishna-Incarnation. And even the remaining portions of the *Bhagavata*, devoted to the other Incarnations and to other themes appropriate to it as a Purana, are all posited as a preparation for the great event of Krishna's

advent. The life history of Krishna, embodying in it His dealings with various devotees in different forms of loving relationship, His destruction of wicked Asuras and kings, His instructions to devotees, and His revelation of divine powers and attributes, are elaborately treated and offered to mankind as matter for study and contemplation for the attainment of devotion and salvation.

The dominating importance of Krishna is so great that there are sects of Vaishnavism which hold that the *Bhagavata* depicts Krishna as the Deity and Mahavishnu as an emanation of His. This idea, rather difficult to substantiate, is maintained on the strength of the *Bhagavata* verse: "While all the other manifestations mentioned before are only aspects and parts of the Purusha, Krishna is Bhagavan Himself." Though one may not agree with the above-mentioned sectarian interpretation, it has to be granted that in Krishna all the Bhagas or divine majesties that enter into the concept of the Bhagavan (cf. c.I, v. 10) were fully represented and therefore he is unique among Incarnations. This uniqueness of Krishna, the acceptance of His divine perfection, is to be understood and accepted fully, if the special doctrine of devotion centring on Him is to be understood in the proper light.

Many of these *Bhagavata* narratives are condensed in the *Narayaneeyam*, expressing fully their devotional fervour and implication, while Krishna's life is given an elaborate and highly poetical treatment. On reading these, an individual brought up in the prevailing traditions of history and natural studies, is likely to feel puzzled how these Puranic accounts are to be accepted and accommodated in his intellectual melieu. Are they historical? Are they at the level of fiction? Are they compatible with science? These are some of the questions that would agitate a modern mind.

The answer is that the Pauranika narratives are to be valued for the spiritual stimulations they give and are not to be approached as history or science, though much of both of these may be involved in them. History in itself consists of events, and events are fleeting like a line on water. Events, however, become enduring and worthy of being called history, to the extent they make an impact on the human consciousness. Most of these events are soon forgotten and remain only in records. Some, however, remain in the memory of peoples as a remembered tradition stimulating their thought and action. Apart from this, mere events have no worth, no

reality, no existential[1] value. They are pure abstractions. Now if an impact and experience of a more enduring type could be made on the psyche of man from a dimension different from that of space-time events, or even if the stimulation of space-time events gets mixed up with many such psychic factors and produce a tradition that is sufficient to inspire and activise man in pursuit of the highest object of life—then such experiences and traditions must be accepted as having a much greater existential value than what could be extracted from them by research in terms of so-called historical facts. To call such tradition by familiar names like myths or fables in the sense that they are mere fanciful accounts or concoctions, is to entirely forget that these Pauranika traditions are of existential value, whatever their origin, and have become psychic realities in the consciousness of great communities. Even when the so-called historical facts and personalities endure in the consciousness of man as a living force, as in the case of historical Divine Incarnations, it happens only by their first ceasing to be three-dimensional events, and then coming to be accepted by the human consciousness as psychic realities transcending their space-time relationship. Had it not been for this acceptance, they would have been like mere lines on water or bubbles in the midmost ocean—mere facts of the past, not realities enduring through to the present.

To trace the origins of these traditions to some clever human brains, sitting together and concocting them, would be as foolish as saying that the Himalayas, the Ganges or the Indian Ocean have been formed by spade work by some groups of men. Even as these latter were wrought by the creative Cosmic Mind working through the internal forces functioning within physical Nature—for they have taken meaningful shapes that have enabled the growth of life, communities and civilisations—the Cult Deities and the devotional narratives and traditions about them are psychic expressions of the supreme Spiritual Reality in human consciousness. They are to be evaluated as neither history, nor geography, nor science, though considerable elements of all these may be involved in them. To interpret all Purana as factual (in the sense of events in space-time), as some Indian fundamentalists

[1] The word 'existential' is used here and in other parts of the Introduction only in a limited sense, and does not convey all the implications of the existentialist philosophy. The sense is this: anything that is of concern to human consciousness and can produce a certian impact on it must be conceded a greater reality value than the purely unconcerned and abstract entities of merely logical and antiquarian import.

do, is as much an injustice to them as the attitude of some moderns who equate them with stories and fables. They belong to a supra-historical order, and their worth is existential as enduring psychic verities in human consciousness. Their purpose, too, is not the teaching of history, or geography, or science, but converting these and all other available information on the universe, creation, plants, animals, human societies, philosophies, achievements of royal dynasties, lives of saints and holy personages, divine beings recognised as Incarnations, and all other kinds of traditions into one integrated literature of high psychic potentiality, capable of stimulating in man a keen sense of an omniscient, omnipotent, and all-loving Spiritual Reality, who is loving, lovable and responsive, who can be communed with, prayed to and visualised in various forms of spiritual glory. It is in this, their cumulative devotional effect on the mind, and not in the investigation of their individual statements or in a critique of their methodology that one should seek their relevance. To do otherwise will be only like the conduct of one going into the mango grove to count its leaves in place of eating its fruits. It is therefore mentioned, that of the ten subjects dealt with in the Puranas, all the nine lead to the tenth—Apasraya or God. This outlook of the Puranas in general is voiced forth in 12.3.14–15 of the *Bhagavata* as follows: " I have narrated all these accounts of great men of ancient days, all of whom are dead and gone, leaving behind only their reputation for good deeds, only with a view to create in you renunciation and spiritual enlightenment. All the descriptive details given here should not be taken as literal or as factual history, (they being shaped and meant for the above-mentioned purpose). Let one who aspires to have devotion to Krishna be always hearing the recitals of His glory, capable of eradicating all evil tendencies." Viewed in this light, the Puranas in general, and the *Bhagavata* in particular, have succeeded more than any other kind of literature in making God a reality to man through their vivid and realistic descriptions and narratives.

V

The Bhagavata: Its Teachings on the Theory and Practice of Bhakti

For the study of the *Narayaneeyam*, it will be of considerable help to know something about the theory and practice of Bhakti as expounded in the *Bhagavata*, which forms the source book of this Text. In fact, without a grasp of the Bhagavata philosophy of devotion, many narratives in the *Narayaneeyam* like the life of Krishna will even be misunderstood. A brief exposition of that philosophy is therefore attempted below.

The term Bhakti comes from the root Bhaj. 'To adore,' 'to love' and 'to keep companionship with' are a few of the religiously significant meanings out of about two dozen meanings of varying import attached to this root. From these is derived the current meaning of the term Bhakti as adoration and loving service of the Supreme Being. As the term is commonly used to indicate all the stages of development of devotion, it will be advantageous to distinguish these stages. At the lowest rung is conventional religion (Sadharana Bhakti), which means mere conformity with the accepted beliefs and observances of a religious community as a matter of routine, without any inner spiritual urge or dynamism. It may sometimes take the shape of a blind and conservative formalism, or even of a religiously oriented and intolerent groupism of a fanatical nature. These hardly deserve the name of Bhakti. The next stage is Sraddha (Faith), when the truths of relgion like God, soul, the hereafter etc., are taken very seriously and the need for some set of practices to intensify one's spiritual perception is felt. Generally it is a calamity in life (as in the case of the author of the *Narayaneeyam*) or contact with a really holy man that brings about this conversion. The *Bhagavata* everywhere extols holy company as the one unfailing factor in generating and augmenting the devotional sentiment in man. Says the *Bhagavata:* "In close association with holy men, one hears the sweet and inspiring accounts of My works and excellences. Soon does a man imbibing them develop in succession Sraddha (Faith), Rati (Attachment) and Bhakti (Love)" (Bh. 3.25.25). A man with Sraddha persistently seeks holy company, as it is the only source of nourishment for his infant faith. He also seeks a spiritual teacher and practises disciplines pre-

scribed by him for the development of his devotional life. The details of these devotional disciplines are given in the last part of this article. At this stage, called Sraddha, it is only by devotional disciplines that love of God and attraction for Him can be stimulated. In their absence, the mind relapses to one's worldly pre-occupations. But with continued practice, the aspirant begins to feel a blissful feeling in communion with God. When this stage is reached, he does not depend much or mainly on external stimulations given by the practice of disciplines, even though he might be practising them. The mind develops a natural proneness to God because of the inward joy His contemplation gives. This stage of the mind feeling a natural joy in God and continuous attraction for Him is called Rati. Now Rati may take an impersonal form—what may be called Jnana-oriented or intellectual love of God—if He is looked upon as the Impersonal Absolute, and the goal of spiritual striving is then conceived as the mergence of one's self in that Absolute. Or, according to the temperament of the aspirant, and the nature of the Sadhana, it may take the form of intense personal love of the all-perfect Divine Person. To distinguish these two developments at the high levels of devotion, the former leading to Sayujya or mergence in the Absolute may be indicated by the common name Bhakti, and the latter by the term Priti. Or if both are to be known by the common name Bhakti, the former may be distinguished by the expression Jnana-bhakti (devotion admixed with knowledge or intellectual love) and the latter by Priti-bhakti (devotion characterised by delight in the service of the Divine Person). The experience of Priti is possible only for an aspirant who looks upon the Supreme Being as the Divine Person, the Bhagavan[1], of whom the Impersonal Absolute is an aspect. In other words the Bhagavan is both the Absolute and the Divine Person. The Bhagavan is identified with Vishnu or Krishna in the *Bhagavata*. In the Priti discipline He is looked upon in any of the forms of loving personal relationship as master, child, friend, husband or the beloved.

But such forms of loving relationship are to be clearly distinguished from the purely dualistic attitude of separate-

[1] The word Bhagavan implies that He possesses the six Bhagas or majesties—Aisvarya (omnipotence), Virya (potency of goodness), Yasas (sanctifying excellences), Sri (beauty and attractiveness of form and spirit), Jnana (omniscience) and Vairagya (non-attachment in all cosmic activities). See the *Narayaneeyam* Text, c.I., v. 10.

ness. Separateness by itself can only create distance and is antagonistic to pure love. Pure love is based on the sense of the object of love being one's 'own'; and this is possible only when there is a sense of unity of substance in spite of apparent distinction. The point may be illustrated by comparing the relationship existing between a king and an officer of his, with the one between the same king and his son, the heir-apparent. The former is a purely external relationship. It is based upon the apprehension of the king's power only. It ceases to subsist when the king loses his power. For, basically he is a stranger, and the relationship with him depends mainly on considerations of obtaining advantages such as wealth, position etc., if he is pleased. The relationship of the prince with his father, the king, on the other hand, stands on quite a different footing. The relationship is inherent and cannot be broken by any extraneous circumstance. Though there is a sense of distinction, it is cemented by an inseparable sense of unity expressing itself as a feeling of 'belongingness' or an attitude of being one's 'own.' As a consequence, the sense of intimacy overcomes the awareness of the power and the majesty of the object of love. It also results in spontaneous service of that object, without expectation of any extraneous reward, the pure delight of such service being the only reward, if any at all. Priti is this delight in service of God as one's beloved, wherein the sense of Divine power and majesty is counterpoised by that of the Lord's lovableness and by the intimacy of His relationship with the devotee.

It is held by some schools of Vaishnavism that it is only to one who is established in this relationship of Priti, personal relationship expressing itself as the pure delight of service, that Krishna reveals His Ananda (Blissful) nature in its fullness. In the intellectual love leading to Sayujya or oneness, distinguished here from Priti by the expression Bhakti, the Lord is revealed mainly as Being-Consciousness and only very hazily as Bliss for want of the channel of communication consisting in personal relationship. It is in this sense that the *Bhagavata* speaks of Bhakti (meaning, of the Priti variety) as superior to Mukti and that Bhaktas of the highest order do not care for Mukti in the sense of mergence in Him but only for love expressing itself as delight in His service, involving them in the Leela (sportive expressions) of the Divine Person in His redemptive role or in His transcendental abode of Vaikuntha. To such devotees steeped in personal love of Him, the Lord even subordinates Himself.

Says the Lord in this connection: "O Sage! It is as if I am not free, subject as I am to my devotees. Being fond of my devotees, my heart is under their sway. I do not value myself or even Sri who is ever associated with Me, as I do these holy men who have accepted Me as their supreme goal. How can I abandon these men who have sought refuge in Me, abandoning their wives, children, relatives, houses, wealth and even life itself? The holy men who have deep-rooted love for Me and are benevolent to all beings, win Me over as a faithful wife does a dutiful husband. Having attained to life's fulfilment by My service, they do not care for the four forms of Mukti (liberation) like Salokya and the rest, which are in their reach through their service of Me. How little then would they care for the perishable attainments of the world? Holy men are verily My heart, and I am verily the heart of holy men. They do not know of anything but Me, and I, of anything but them" (Bh. 9.4.63–68).

Thus the *Bhagavata* presents to us two ideal forms of Bhakti—Jnana-bhakti or intellectual love with mergence in the Absolute as the goal, and Prema-bhakti (Priti) with Divine service as its consummation. In the former type of love, Bhakti is a means, the end being Moksha (freedom from embodiment), while in the latter, Bhakti is both the *means* and the *end*. For this reason Bhakti of the Priti type is described as the fifth Purushartha, in distinction from Moksha considered generally as the fourth and the supreme value of life (Parama-purushartha). The *Bhagavata* is unique for its special stress on Priti-bhakti and the illustration and exposition of it through the life and actions of the Divine Incarnation Sri Krishna and His associates.

In a tone somewhat different from the definitions of Bhakti by the theoreticians of its doctrines like Narada and Sandilya, the *Bhagavata* gives its own description of it. Comprehending all ramifications of Bhakti, there is the following description of it in Bh. 3.25.32–33 "When all the energies of man, including those of the organs of knowledge and action, get concentrated as a unified mental mode directed to the Supreme Being, spontaneous like an instinct and devoid of any extraneous motives, the resulting state of mind is called Bhakti. It is superior to Mukti. Like fire it burns up the soul's sheath of ignorance."

Such a definition of Bhakti includes in it both these forms of higher devotion, the Jnana-bhakti ending in mergence in the Absolute and Priti-bhakti consisting in loving service.

Its implications are, however, still more wide and diversified. Since it is a 'mental mode,' concentrating all energies on the Bhagavan, the nature of the urge that directs it ceases to be of importance; only it must be directed to the Lord, it must be spontaneous, and it must be an ultimate end in itself. The frontiers of devotion as conceived by the *Bhagavata*, become enlarged. For instance it finds a place for a new type of devotional expression described as 'communion through confrontation' (Vidvesha-bhakti). Mortal dread of an enemy and the emotions of fear and anger arising therefrom are capable of focusing the mind on that person as forcefully as love on a beloved person. This form of communion is possible, however, only for certain Titanic souls and not for every one. Instances of this are Asuras like Hiranyaksha, Hiranyakasipu, Ravana etc., described in the *Bhagavata* as also in the *Narayaneeyam* (c. 12 & 24). In whatever way a man approaches God, in the self-same way does He respond to him. These Titanic souls who looked upon Him as a dreaded enemy and spent all their time in fear of Him and in a spirit of confrontation with Him, had their minds always focused on Him in complete absorption. This absorption purified their minds and brought about their salvation through death at His hands. So the *Bhagavata* lays down the dictum: "The worm imprisoned in a cavity and guarded by the beetle lives in constant dread of it, and by such identification through fear, gets the form of the beetle. Even so, by constantly thinking of Krishna as their dreaded enemy, they (the enemies of Krishna) became washed of all their sins and attained to Him" (Bh. 7.1.23–28). Only, as their attitude was one of enmity and confrontation, the Lord approached them in a corresponding way and met them with weapons in mortal combat.

Although the idea of communion by confrontation has no practical application in life, it is important to grasp the principle involved in it, as it helps one understand the *Bhagavata* idea that any passion of the human spirit, when directed to God, is responded to by Him in a corresponding way, and that in spite of its contrary appearance, it has the potency of Bhakti and purifies and uplifts the aspirant concerned. This theory is applied to all the other powerful passions of the human mind, including sex love. The apparent illicit love of the Gopikas for Krishna and His amorous dalliances with them are depicted in all detail as the central episode in Krishna's life both in the *Bhagavata* and the *Narayaneeyam*

(cf. c. 65–69), to illustrate this great theory of the devotional school. The central point to remember about this depiction is that Krishna, according to the *Bhagavata*, is Bhagavan Swayam (the very God presenting Himself as man), and that the Gopikas in being powerfully attracted to Him, maybe at first by His ravishing beauty, had their minds fixed in complete absorption only in God. As a medicine taken, with or without the knowledge of its potency, has its inevitable effect on a man, so also absorption of the mind in Krishna, God manifested as man, had its sanctifying effect on the Gopikas, who were raised by the power of their love for Krishna from Kamukis (sexually infatuated females) to Premikas (devotees established in the Priti type of Divine love). Krishna's dealings with them might look like those of a lover with his beloved, matching with the attitude of the Gopikas, but their import is God-love of the highest order. As it is put effectively in the *Narayaneeyam*: " The prompting of cupid became a blessing to these women in so far as it brought in them the intensity of attachment to Thee and the consequent detachment from all worldly concerns. Attachment between the sexes is spontaneous, being an instinctive urge, while devotion to God, the means for salvation, may result from great striving or may not. But Oh! what a blessing, what a rare good fortune that in these women both these have coincided (as their passionate attachment was fixed on Thee, the Supreme Purusha incarnated as Krishna, on whom all spiritual aspirants also fix their minds)! " (c. 59.10).

As for the ethical propriety of Krishna's relationship with the Gopikas, the question is considered redundant by devotees on different grounds. Some take the depiction of Gopi-Krishna relationship as only allegorical for portraying the passionate longing of the soul for the Supreme Spirit. Others contend that the Gopikas met Krishna not in a physical sense, but in the state of Bhava (spiritual absorption). The *Bhagavata* itself takes the relationship as factual and maintains that no human standard of morality comes into the picture. Questioned on this point by Raja Parikshit, the sage Suka says as follows: " Divine personages are found to over-ride the rules of Dharma (ethics) and do actions of a seemingly shocking nature. But just as no impurity affects fire which consumes everything, nothing causes blemish to such persons of immense potency. But lesser men should not imitate them in these respects even mentally. If they do so foolishly, they

will perish, as one will do if one drinks poison following the example of Rudra. The instructions of goldly persons are valid; so are *some* of their actions too. A wise man will follow only such of their actions as are consistent with their words. It is admitted that for enlightened men without the ego sense, there is no selfish gain to be attained by their actions nor any loss by abstinence from them, and that they are above good and evil. How can these affect the supreme Lord Krishna who is the master of all beings—gods, men, animals and the rest? By devotion to His holy feet the great sages derive their Yogic power and thus they become free from the bondage of all actions. How can any bondage or sin accrue to the Universal Being who has assumed a body out of His own will, and by devotion to whom even these great sages derive their spiritual excellence? He who permeates all beings, including the Gopikas and their husbands, and directs the mind and senses of every one—even He out of sportive intention has assumed a body as Krishna. For bestowing His blessings on all beings He has assumed a body, and He sports with that body in ways that interest and attract men to Him. By Krishna's mystic power the inhabitants of Vraja found their women in their homes all the time, and had no occasion to be displeased with Krishna. He who, with faith in Krishna in his heart (*i.e.* regards Him as the Supreme Being) hears, reads and narrates these amorous dalliances of His with the Gopikas, that intelligent man will obtain deep devotion to the Lord, and will soon overcome lust, the real heart disease of mankind"[1] (Bh. 10.33.30–40).

Personal love taking the form of a particular mental mode is called a Bhava. The Bhava of the Gopikas is called Madhura, one of sweetness, which includes the attitudes of both the wife towards a husband and of the beloved towards a lover. This form is taken to be the acme of personal love by all Bhakti scriptures like the *Bhagavata* and the *Narayaneeyam*, as it subsumes in itself the excellences of all the different modes of love. The other forms of love (Bhavas) mentioned in Bhakti scriptures and illustrated in the *Bhagavata*, are Santa, Dasya, Sakhya, and Vatsalya. Santa or the peaceful Bhava is that of the philosopher fully conscious of

[1] This is to be taken as a suggestive hint to show that the purport of the *Bhagavata* is not to delight people with a sex story but to eradicate sexuality itself. So while accepting realism, the *Bhagavata* has symbolism as the ultimate meaning. Under the garb of describing the illicit love of the Gopis, the great scripture is really describing the purest and most powerful form of God-love.

Divine majesty and excellences, and in its fullest development it ends in Sayujya or mergence in the Impersonal aspect of Brahman. Here Bhakti is accepted as a means for attaining an end, which is Moksha. So it does not come under the Priti type. For, in Priti, devotion is both the *means* and the *end*.

All the other Bhavas mentioned above come within Priti, as they are based on personal relationship. The Dasya is the attitude of looking upon God as one's master. It may also be considered as including the filial Bhava or the attitude of a child to a parent. The Sakhya attitude consists in looking on God as one's dear friend, while that of Vatsalya is to regard Him as one's child. The Madhura or conjugal attitude, already described, is the combination of the intimacy and the intensity of all these forms of relationship and marks the acme of personal love. The life of Krishna and his relationship with the various devotees associated with Him illustrate all these aspects of personal love. But Madhura Bhava (amorous love) as expressed in the illicit relationship of the Gopikas with Krishna on the one hand,[1] and in the married love of His consorts like Rukmini on the other, is elaborated in the *Bhagavata* and the *Narayaneeyam* with special emphasis on account of its uniqueness and its comprehensiveness as an expression of the Priti form of Bhakti.

In all these forms of Priti, it is not that there is no comprehension of the Bhagavan's majesty as in Santa Bhava, but it is outweighed, and any sense of distance separating Him from the devotee is overcome, by the vivid feeling that He is " one's own", one's nearest and dearest. The awareness of Divine majesty does not in the least inhibit the expression of intimacy between the Lord and the devotee in this form of loving relationship. The Lord permits the devotee to appear

[1] The relationship of illicit love is introduced overlooking all ethical norms because it embodies the strongest form of affection, in which all consideration of prestige, returns, security and even self-preservation are given up by a woman who goes away with her lover out of genuine and overpowering love. Love of God and surrender to Him should attain to this kind of uninhibited intensity and renunciation of self-centredness, giving away everything to Him and asking for nothing from Him. The love of the wife falls short of this perfection, as her status is protected by law and social conventions and she has assurances of support and security. So the Gopikas of Vrindavana, who were in illicit love with Krishna, are held forth as the highest embodiment of spiritual love, the consorts of Krishna coming only next to them. In reading about these human expressions of love, it should always be remembered that the *Bhagavata* is not at all narrating an absorbing love story. For the *Bhagavata* has stated in its very second verse that what it discusses is the Dharma of the all-renouncing Paramahamsas who have abandoned the life of falsity and all the animal passions of the heart. Viewed in this context the spiritual import of these narratives will become evident.

greater, and he looks smaller, subjecting Himself to the devotee's attitude. So the Lord says in the *Bhagavata*: " I am subordinate to my devotees, and am therefore in a sense without freedom. Being extremely fond of my devotees of exalted mind, my heart is under their control." (Bh. 9.4.63) It is because of the transcendent excellence of this kind of devotion that Suka says in the *Bhagavata* that the Lord gives Mukti liberally, but Bhakti very seldom (Bh. 5.6. 18).

The following few verses from the Bhagavata on the uniqueness and spiritual authenticity and adequacy of these forms of personal relationship will be found revealing. " By Bhava (feeling) alone the Gopikas and even unintelligent creatures like cows, deer, elephant, serpent etc., attained to spiritual consummation in Me. They never learnt the Vedas, they never served any teacher, they practised no austerity, but by mere association with Me, they attained to Me" (Bh. 11.12.7–8). " Lust, anger, fear, affection, friendship, sense of oneness, whichever sentiment man entertains towards Hari, he will attain to Him through that" (Bh. 10.29. 15). " Even as by Bhakti (pure devotion to God), so also through lust, animosity, fear, personal attachment etc., many have attained to Him, having overcome the evil effect of these dark passions on account of their minds being concentrated on the Lord. The Gopikas through Kama (lust), Kamsa through fear, Sisupala through enmity, the Vrishnis through clannishness, the Pandavas through friendly affection and sages through devotion (Bhakti)—attained to Him" (Bh. 7.1. 30). " Through the constant focusing of their thought on Thee, Thy antagonists attained to the same spiritual goal as the sages who were adepts in the control of the vital forces, mind, senses etc. and in meditation on Thee. To Thee, we (the repositories of Vedic wisdom), and the women of Vrinda-vana who longed for the embrace of Thy charming arms, are of equal worth" (10.87.22). "Hundreds of women attained to Me, the Supreme Brahman, though not knowing My real nature, through their love of Me as a paramour in whom they took delight" (11.12.13). "By the strength of their attachment to Me, they (the Gopikas) became oblivious of their individuality and the whole objective world, and like the mind of the contemplative in Samadhi and the river merged in the ocean, overcame all distinction created by name and form" (Bh. 11.12.12). The idea is again expressed in a clinching fashion in the words of Uddhava, the great statesman-

devotee of Krishna. Referring to the love of the Gopikas, he exclaims, " How low are these women, belonging, as they do, to a forest tribe given to adulterous sex relationships! But how deep-rooted is their devotion to Krishna, the Supreme Being! As a potent medicine swallowed (with or without knowledge of its efficacy) invariably cures a patient, so the Lord brings about the spiritual regeneration of a person whose mind settles on Him, however unwittingly (Bh. 10. 47.59).

The descriptions of the relationship between Krishna and His devotees, because of its personal nature, will resemble very much the portrayal of human love, the most noteworthy feature being the highly erotic poetry employed. But it has always to be remembered that their import is purely spiritual in so far as: (1) The object of affection here is the Supreme Being Himself, and hence what looks like worldly love is only God-love in reality. (2) Such affection gradually eradicates all evil and sublimates all lower instincts. And with this attainment the devotee rises to a level of experience in which the awareness of Divine majesty is felt vividly without being an inhibitive influence on the intimate and loving personal relationship. As it is put in the *Bhagavata*: "Just as fire removes the stain found in gold owing to contact with other metals, so Vishnu by His presence, removes all evil tendencies in the hearts of persons devoted to Him" (12.3.47). Hence it is maintained in the *Bhagavata* that the reverential study of the description of the amorous dalliances of Krishna with the Gopikas will cure one of Kama (sexuality), the universal heart disease of man. (3) This form of Bhakti is to be sharply distinguished from worldly love in so far as it is free from any touch of self-seeking. To gain or achieve something for one's own advantage is always the motive force behind worldly love. It is also dominated by possessiveness and jealousy, and it runs the risk of total cessation when the expected advantages are not realised. Priti-bhakti, in spite of its formal resemblance to worldly love, is just the reverse of it in these respects. There is in it no expectation of any return, no adverse reaction, and no possibility of abatement under any circumstance. It takes the form of service of the Divine Person with one's entire being, which is in itself the highest delight even when experiences ordinarily considered painful are involved in it. Such joy of service is called Bhajanananda, and the *Bhagavata* states in innumerable places that the

devotees who are established in it reject even Brahmananda or the bliss of Mukti as of lesser value. Says the *Bhagavata*: "The bliss that can be had by contemplating on Thee and hearing the recital of Thy glories by Thy devotees cannot be had even by dwelling in the impersonal infinite Being (Brahman), who is the Self of all, not to speak then of heavenly joys which are threatened by the sword of Time" (4.9.10). Bhakti thus becomes an end in itself, besides being the means also. Hence, it is said that the *Bhagavata* has added Bhakti as the fifth Purushartha (value of life), to the four usually accepted values of Dharma (morality), Artha (wealth), Kama (pleasure) and Moksha (liberation).

Till now the discussion has been about Bhakti in its highest form—as Sadhya (accomplished) or as Nirguna (transcending the Gunas of Prakriti). But what is important from the practical point of view is the disciplines that lead to it. These come under Sraddha, the first stage of Bhakti referred to earlier. This is also known by the name of Sadhana-bhakti (disciplinary devotion). It has been pointed out that the distinctive characteristic of this stage is that, while in the higher stages of Rati and Bhakti, devotion has become an automatic and in-built sentiment requiring no external stimulation, in this earlier stage it has to be roused up and sustained by deliberately cultivated disciplines or Sadhanas. Hence their supreme importance for the man trying to build up the spiritual life. These disciplines of Bhakti, as stated in the *Bhagavata*, are also collectively called Bhagavata Dharma. They have been stated in the *Bhagavata* as follows: "For aspirants who are not learned in the Vedas and other scriptures, the Lord has given the Bhagavata Dharma as an easy way of attaining to Him. A person following this path never sustains any spiritual fall. Even if he runs with eyes closed, he will not slip and topple down. Whatever a devotee does with body, mind, senses, intellect and spirit—not only scripture-ordained duties but all duties natural to him—let him consecrate all to Narayana by making them an offering unto Him" (11.2.34-36). And further, speaking more specifically about the disciplines, it is said (in Bh. 7.5.23-24) "Sravanam (hearing narratives of the glorious deeds and excellences of Vishnu), Kirtanam (chanting His name and reciting hymns in His praise), Smaranam (remembering Him continuously), Padasevanam (serving Him), Archanam (worshipping Him), Vandanam (paying obeisance to Him)

Dasyam (practising the role of a servant of His), Sakhyam (looking upon Him as an intimate friend) and Atmanivedanam (surrendering onself totally to Him)—these are the nine forms of devotional discipline which man has to practise in a spirit of dedication to Vishnu." The practice of these nine specific devotional disciplines has to be preceded and accompanied by the discharge of one's duties in dedication to the Lord. Only then can the mind be comparatively freed from its demoniacal tendencies (Asuri Sampat), standing as the most formidable obstruction on the spiritual path. Practice of ethical excellences has to precede and accompany spiritual practice. So also faith (Sraddha) must be intense and deep-rooted; it must manifest as a longing for God. Without these pre-requisites man will make only a show of the specific disciplines mentioned. Their practice will not be effective. It is only in holy company that faith and longing for God germinate and take root in the mind of man, and so the first of these disciplines Sravanam (hearing) refers primarily to the listening to the words of holy men on God and His excellences and on spiritual life in general. Secondarily, it means also listening to the *Bhagavata* and such other Bhakti scriptures as also reverential study of them. Kirtanam is collective singing of God's glories and excellences, where too the pious company is the most decisive factor. Smaranam is remembrance. For the successful practice of this, an aspirant should take initiation from a Guru and repeat the Mantra given to him with concentration and faith, and also practise meditation on the Deity. It is only when one's sub-conscious mind is powerfully influenced by such practice, that one can remember the Lord even when there are not the external stimulations in the shape of 'hearing' and 'hymning.' Continuous repetition of the Divine name even when engaged in external work helps Smarana. In fact success in Smarana is the indication that devotion is progressing from Sraddha towards Rati (the state of loving attachment). Continuous remembrance is possible only when one feels joy in such remembrance. Padaseva is the service of all beings with the vision that this whole universe is His manifestation. It is stated in the Vedanta texts that of His four Padas (aspects), one Pada is manifested as this world of Becoming (the universe) while the other three are transcendental. So, the service of the manifested Pada of the Lord is Padaseva. It can also mean the service of holy men, in whom the Lord dwells in a

special sense. Archana is service of Him in images. It includes all forms of devotional rituals, worship, festivals, pilgrimages etc., undertaken with faith and solemnity born out of a sense of the real presence of the Lord. Vandanam is not merely making prostrations before the images of the Deity and before holy men, but behaving respectfully towards all beings with the feeling that God resides in every one of them. It expresses itself in true humility, service of all, and absence of vanity and egotism.

The next three, Dasya, Sakhya, and Atmanivedana are the mental attitudes which have been described earlier as Bhavas in the discussion on Priti-bhakti. They can be successfully practised only at the advanced stage when God-love has taken an intense personal form. But as the principle in all Sadhanas is to make the end itself the means, one may adopt an appropriate attitude, preferably that of Dasya, towards the Lord, even when one is at the stage of preparatory disciplines. It will help in re-educating and recasting our worldly ego-sense. Our ordinary sense of identity with our worldly situation, namely, our estimation of ourselves as men of such and such nationality, related to such and such persons in such and such ways, occupying such and such positions in life etc., should be replaced by a sense of our 'belonging' to the Lord as His servant or child. When one's ego-sense is transformed in this way, devotion becomes an in-built sentiment. Sakhya or friendly attitude marks the stage of growing intimacy in which inhibitions arising from the sense of God's being the creator and the seat of infinite power, are overcome by that sense of intimacy which enables one to become established in any of the devotional attitudes (Bhavas) upto Madhura mentioned earlier. All these disciplines finally lead to complete surrender of one's possessions, actions, body, mind and ego-sense unto Him. That is Atmanivedana or self-surrender, of which the most noted exemplars are the Gopikas of Vrindavana.

Through long and continuous practice of this nine-limbed discipline, devotion gradually takes the form of Rati or inward attachment to God, in which state, even without any external stimulation, the mind begins to dwell on Him with delight and never turns away in spite of distractions arising from sufferings and worries. In its fullest maturity, Rati becomes Bhakti either of the Santa type, which leads to Sayujya or liberation of mergence in the Deity, or of the Priti type, which ends in

eternal adoration and loving service of the Divine Person. Bhakti, it is held by the *Bhagavata*, brings along with its efflorescence all the three spiritual excellences, namely, spontaneous love of God, renunciation (Virakti) and knowledge of the unity of existence (Jnana) in the heart of the devotee, just as a morsel of food simultaneously gives delight, appeasement of hunger and physical strength (Bh. 11.2.42). Thus Bhakti is a super-value, which is attended by all other spiritual values.

One in whom Bhakti has become a perfected experience is called a Bhagavatottama. The stages of evolution of the devotional experience ending in that of the Bhagavatottama are thus described in the *Bhagavata*: "The perfect Bhagavata or devotee of the Lord (Bhagavatottama) is one who sees the glory of the Bhagavan, the inmost Self, reflected in all beings and all beings as dwelling in Him, their inmost Self. A mediocre Bhagavata is one who entertains an attitude of adoring love towards God, of friendliness to His devotees, of kindliness and sympathy to common people, and of indifference to one's enemies and bad people. And he is the inferior type of Bhagavata who performs worship of God in images with faith and devotion, but is totally indifferent to devotees of God and other beings (on account of his incapacity to see the Divinity dwelling in all beings)." (Bh. 11, 2, 45–47).

Again speaking of the very wide range and varying stages of devotional experience, the *Bhagavata* states: "The practice of Bhakti takes many forms, because of the differences in people's thought and attitude, arising from their mental constitution, the nature of the dominant Guna of Prakriti in them, and the tradition to which they belong. The man dominated by Tamas conceives Me, at the prompting of his own cruel and excitable nature, as a being entirely separate from himself (*i.e.* as a tribal Deity or a polytheistic God), to be propitiated from motives of vengeance, pride, envy, and such other low propensities. The man of Rajasic nature worships Me as an extraneous being in the images and the like for the fulfilment of worldly desires like those for wealth, fame, and the rest. The man of Sattvika nature is one who, though still maintaining the attitude of separation from Me, worships Me for liberation from the bondage of Karma (*i.e.* Moksha) by performing all his duties as an offering unto Me, as laid down in the scriptures.

"In contrast to all the above (all of which are based on Gunas of Prakriti), the highest form of Bhakti, which transcends the three Gunas of Prakriti (Nirguna-Bhakti) has no extraneous motives, and is based on the inseparable intimacy of the Jiva with the Lord. Its characteristic consists in the continuous and unobstructed flow of the mind, like the waters of the Ganges, towards Me residing in the hearts of all, by the mere remembrance of My excellences. Such devotees do not accept, even when offered, any of the four forms of liberation (Moksha)—Salokya (living in My sphere), Samipya (living close to Me) Sarupya (having a form similar to Mine) and Sayujya (being one with Me). The only thing they want is opportunity to do loving service to Me (without expectation of any reward from it). Such is the greatness and glory of this supreme expression of Bhakti. By means of it the Jiva overcomes the hold of the three Gunas of Prakriti and becomes fit for the Divine State" (Bh. 3.29, 7–14).

Continuing the topic, the *Bhagavata* describes the means by which this state of mind is attained. "The mind attains to such a state by adopting the following disciplines: The duties of life have to be performed with detachment and as an offering to the Divine. Ritualistic worship promoting devotion and not inflicting pain on creatures, has to be observed. My images installed in holy places should be worshipped, seen, touched, and glorified by hymns and praises capable of stimulating devotion. My presence in all beings should be recognised. The mind should be disciplined to have no attachment to worldly objects. . . . I abide in all beings as their innermost soul. Without recognizing this, mere worship of Me in images is only a semblance of worship. If one disregards Me present in all as their soul and lord, and offers worship to images, such worship is as ineffective as sacrificial offering made in ashes. A man should, however, worship Me in images along with the discharge of his duties towards others until he actually realises My presence in himself and in all beings. . . Holy men should be honoured, men in distress should be shown sympathy and help, and equals should be treated with friendship and courtesy. Control of the senses and the mind should be practised. Scriptures should be studied and devotional hymns and praises sung. Holy company should be sought. Straightforwardness and an unegotistic frame of mind should be cultivated. A man who lives with the attainment of God-love as the sole object of his life and follows the disciplines mentioned above, will

gain absolute purity of mind, as a result of which he will attain that capacity to constantly remember Me with delight and be absorbed in Me. As the fragrance mingled with the wind automatically reaches the organ of smell, the mind freed from worldliness by the disciplines of devotion, learns to go effortlessly to the Supreme Being" (Bh. 3.29, 15–27 abridged).

TRANSLATOR

NARAYANEEYAM

CANTO 1

THE GLORY OF THE LORD

सान्द्रानन्दावबोधात्मक-मनुपमितं कालदेशावधिभ्यां
निर्मुक्तं नित्यमुक्तं निगमशतसहस्रेण निर्भास्यमानम् ।
अस्पष्टं दृष्टमात्रे पुनरुरु-पुरुषार्थात्मकं ब्रह्मतत्त्वं
तत्तावद्भाति साक्षाद्-गुरुपवनपुरे हन्त भाग्यं जनानाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. In the temple of Guruvayoor there shines, in truth and in reality, what appears at first to be a mere image but on contemplation reveals itself to be the condensed essence of Consciousness-Bliss—the veritable Brahman Supreme—who is the ultimate end of all human endeavours, to whom there is none comparable, who is ever beyond the limitations of time and space, who is eternally free, and whose nature the numerous texts of the Vedas seek to reveal. Fortunate, indeed, is mankind (that such a manifestation of Divinity exists in its midst as the image of Sri Krishna)![1]

एवं दुर्लभ्यवस्तुन्यपि सुलभतया हस्तलब्धे यदन्यत्
तन्वा वाचा धिया वा भजति बत जनः क्षुद्रतैव स्फुटेयम् ।
एते तावद्वयं तु स्थिरतरमनसा विश्वपीडापहत्यै
निश्शेषात्मानमेनं गुरुपवनपुरा-धीशमेवाश्रयामः ॥ 2 ॥

2. But alas! What a pity that in spite of the easy availability of this rarest of blessings, men, prompted by their base nature, overlook it and pursue worldly objects with all the powers of their body, mind or intellect! But we, devotees, however, shall, with unswerving devotion, serve the Lord of Guruvayoor, Sri Krishna, the soul of all beings, for the total eradication of all our woes (physical and spiritual).

सत्त्वं यत्तत् पराभ्या-मपरिकलनतो निर्मलं तेन तावद्-
भूतैर्भूतेन्द्रियैस्ते वपुरिति बहुशः श्रूयते व्यासवाक्यम् ।

तत् स्वच्छत्वाद्यदच्छादित-परसुख-चिद्गर्भनिर्भासरूपं
तस्मिन् धन्या रमन्ते श्रुतिमतिमधुरे सुग्रहे विग्रहे ते ॥ 3 ॥

3. Sage Vyasa has repeatedly stated that Thy form is constituted of Suddha-sattva (pure Sattva) without any admixture of Rajas and Tamas. Because of this absolute purity, Thy form gives an unobstructed revelation of its underlying essence of Consciousness-Bliss, and therefore enlightened men delight to contemplate on this, Thy Divine formful manifestation, which is easy to grasp and which is all sweetness to those who think or hear about it.[2]

निष्कम्पे नित्यपूर्णे निरवधि-परमानन्दपीयूषरूपे
निर्लीनानेक-मुक्तावलि-सुभगतमे निर्मलब्रह्मसिन्धौ ।
कल्लोलोल्लासतुल्यं खलु विमलतरं सत्त्वमाहु-स्तदात्मा
कस्मान्नो निष्कलस्त्वं सकल इति वचस्त्वत्कलास्वेव भूमन् ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Infinite Being! Thy Suddha-sattva form is like the wavy surface of the pure Ocean of Brahman, who is unperturbed, ever-full, constituted of inexhaustible Bliss and supremely attractive as the repository of countless pearls of liberated ones absorbed in it. Embracing, as Thy Form does, the whole of that Ocean, why should not Thou be termed Nishkala (Indivisible Whole *i.e.* Complete Incarnation) while all other manifestations are but Kalas (partial revelations) of that Ocean.[3]

निर्व्यापारोऽपि निष्कारणमज भजसे यत्क्रिया-मीक्षणाख्यां
तेनैवोदेति लीना प्रकृति-रसतिकल्पाऽपि कल्पाऽऽदिकाले ।
तस्याः संशुद्धमंशं कमपि तमतिरोधायकं सत्त्वरूपं
स त्वं धृत्वा दधासि स्वमहिमविभवाकुण्ठ वैकुण्ठ रूपम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Birthless One! Though by nature beyond activity, Thou, at the beginning of a new cycle of creation, dost activate spontaneously by a glance, Thy Prakriti (Power) which abides in Thee latent without in any way affecting Thee, as if it were a non-existent entity. O Lord of Vaikuntha, assuming the pure Sattva aspect of Thy Prakriti (Power), which, because

of its purity, does not in the least hide Thy glories and majesties, Thou hast manifested Thyself as this Divine Form.

तत्ते प्रत्यग्रधाराधर-ललितकलाया-वलीकेलिकारं
लावण्यस्यैकसारं सुकृतिजनदृशां पूर्णपुण्यावतारम् ।
लक्ष्मीनिश्शङ्कलीला-निलयनममृत-स्यन्दसन्दोहमन्तः
सिञ्चत्संचिन्तकानां वपुरनुकलये मारुतागारनाथ ॥ 6 ॥

6. O Lord of Guruvayoor, I meditate continuously on Thy Form, which surpasses fresh rain clouds and blue lotuses in its dark splendour, which embodies in itself the essence of all that is beautiful, which is, as it were, a holy Descent manifested before the eyes of all virtuous men as the reward for their good deeds, which is the playground of all the unrestricted graces, charms and majesty of goddess Lakshmi, and which generates an abundance of intense Bliss in the hearts of people meditating on it.

कष्टा ते सृष्टिचेष्टा बहुतर-भवखेदावहा जीवभाजा-
मित्येवं पूर्वमालोचित-मजित मया नैवमद्याभिजाने ।
नो चेज्जीवाः कथं वा मधुरतरमिदं त्वद्वपु-श्चिद्रसार्द्रं
नेत्रैः श्रोत्रैश्च पीत्वा परमरस-सुधांभोधिपूरे रमेरन् ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Supreme Being! Once I thought that Thy creative activity is a tragic sport, as it inflicts various forms of suffering on embodied beings (Jivas) involved in the cycle of births and deaths (Samsara), but now I do not think so. For, if there were no creation and therefore no embodied beings (Jivas), who would have been there to revel in the ocean of unparalleled joy derived from the experience of seeing this Form of Thine replete with Consciousness and of hearing descriptions of Thy glory?

नम्राणां सन्निधत्ते सततमपि पुरस्तैरनभ्यर्थितान-
प्यर्थान् कामानजस्रं वितरति परमानन्द-सान्द्रां गतिं च ।
इत्थं निश्शेषलभ्यो निरवधिकफलः पारिजातो हरे त्वं
क्षुद्रं तं शक्रवाटी-द्रुममभिलषति व्यर्थ-मर्थिव्रजोऽयम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Manifesting ever before Thy devotees, Thou grantest, unsought, all the fulfilments of human life besides the bliss of final liberation. O Lord! when such a unique Parijata Tree as bounteous and accessible as Thou art, is available for them, alas, the vast body of desire-prompted men long for the trivial blessings of the Kalpaka-Vriksha (Wish-Yielding Tree) of Indra's heaven (which can yield only sense enjoyments, and that only if votaries specifically pray for them to the accompaniment of elaborate rituals).

कारुण्यात् काममन्यं ददति खलु परे स्वात्मदस्त्वं विशेषा-
दैश्वर्या-दीशतेऽन्ये जगति परजने स्वात्मनोऽपीश्वरस्त्वम् ।
त्वय्युच्चै-रारमन्ति प्रतिपदमधुरे चेतनाः स्फीतभाग्या-
स्त्वं चात्माराम एवेत्यतुलगुणगणाधार शौरे नमस्ते ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! Thou art indeed unique and incomparable in Thy greatness. Other deities grant the desires of their votaries when they are pleased with them. But Thou art unique in granting Thyself (*i.e.* identity with Thyself) to Thy devotees. Other deities rule over the world (as being external to it) by virtue of the power they are invested with; but Thy mastery over all rests on Thy being the inner controller of the essence of all beings (including these deities). All fortunate Jivas seek delight in the inexhaustible mine of joy that Thou art. But as for Thyself, Thou art ever self-satisfied (having none besides Thee as equal or greater).

ऐश्वर्यं शङ्करादी-श्वरविनियमनं विश्वतेजोहराणां
तेजस्संहारि वीर्यं विमलमपि यशो निस्पृहैश्चोपगीतम् ।
अङ्गासङ्गा सदा श्रीरखिलविदसि न क्वापि ते सङ्गवार्ता
तद्वातागारवासिन् मुरहर भगवच्छब्द-मुख्याश्रयोऽसि ॥ 10 ॥

10. Lord, Thou who art the resident of the temple of Guruvayoor and the destroyer of Mura! Thy Aiswarya (Lordliness) consists in being the controller of all gods beginning from Sankara; Thy Virya (Prowess), in possessing the potency to contain all forces that are destructive of the good of the worlds; Thy Yasas (Fame), in providing material pure and holy enough even for all-renouncing sages to sing about; Thy

Sri (Beauty-cum-auspiciousness), in becoming the very abode of the goddess Sri; Thy Jnana (wisdom), in being the all-knowing; and Thy Vairagya (renunciation), in being non-attached (in respect of all Thy creative activity). The term Bhagavat (which means one possessing the above-mentioned Bhagas or divine majesties) is therefore primarily applicable to Thee.

CANTO 2

THE FORMFUL ASPECT OF THE LORD

सूर्यस्पर्धिकिरीट-मूर्ध्वतिलक-प्रोद्भासि-फालान्तरं
कारुण्याकुलनेत्र-मार्द्रहसितोल्लासं सुनासापुटम् ।
गण्डोद्यन्मकराभ-कुण्डलयुगं कण्ठोज्ज्वलत्कौस्तुभं
त्वद्रूपं वनमाल्यहारपटल-श्रीवत्सदीप्रं भजे ॥ 1 ॥

1. I adore the Form of the Lord with head crowned with a diadem that rivals the sun in its brilliance; with forehead whose beauty is enhanced by the upright sandal paste mark; with eyes brimming with mercy; with face lit up by a benevolent smile; with nose well-proportioned and attractive; with ears adorned with fish-marked pendants that add lustre to the cheeks by their reflection; with neck wearing the luminous jewel Kausthubha; and with chest resplendent with a variety of decorations like the floral wreath, lines of pearl necklaces and the auspicious mark called Srivatsa.

केयूराङ्गद-कङ्कणोत्तम-महारत्नाङ्गुलीयाङ्कित-
श्रीमद्-बाहु-चतुष्क-सङ्गत-गदा-शङ्खारि-पङ्केरुहाम् ।
कांचित् काञ्चनकाञ्चि-लाञ्छित-लसत्पीतांबरा-लम्बिनी-
मालम्बे विमलाम्बुजद्युतिपदां मूर्ति तवार्तिच्छिदम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. I take refuge in Thy ineffable Form glowing, as it does, with ornaments like Keyura (epaulets), Angada and Kankana (bracelets) and finger-rings of precious jewels; with four sacred arms holding in them the mace, the conch, the discus and the lotus; with waist wrapped in yellow silk fastened

by a golden waist band; and with feet that resemble exquisite lotuses and remove the woes of devotees.

यत्त्रैलोक्य-महीयसोऽपि महितं सम्मोहनं मोहनात्
कान्तं कान्तिनिधानतोऽपि मधुरं माधुर्यधुर्यादपि ।
सौन्दर्योत्तरतोऽपि सुन्दरतरं त्वद्रूपमाश्चर्यतो-
ऽप्याश्चर्यं भुवने न कस्य कुतुकं पुष्णाति विष्णो विभो ॥ ३ ॥

3. O All-pervading Being! Who is there in all the universe that will not be entranced by this Thy surprisingly wonderful Form, which is superior in excellences to all objects considered great in the three worlds; which is more charming than the most charming of entities; whose splendour outshines every form of brilliance; and whose sweetness and beauty would put to shame all other objects that are noted for such qualities.

तत्तादृङ्-मधुरात्मकं तव वपुस्संप्राप्य संपन्मयी
सा देवी परमोत्सुका चिरतरं नास्ते स्वभक्तेष्वपि ।
तेनास्या बत कष्ट-मच्युत विभो त्वद्रूप-मानोज्ञक-
प्रेमस्थैर्यमया-दचापल-बला-च्चापल्यवार्तोदभूत् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Lakshmi, (Thy Consort), well-known as the embodiment of all prosperity and auspiciousness, having obtained a place in Thy being, has become engrossed with the sweetness residing in it, and has consequently no inclination to remain with her own votaries. Alas! O unchanging One! It is indeed a pity that this firmness of her attachment to the beauty that suffuses Thy form (for which reason she abandons her devotees) has won for her the stigma of being a 'fickle goddess.'

लक्ष्मीस्तावक-रामणीयकहृतैवेयं परेष्वस्थिरे-
त्यस्मिन्नन्यदपि प्रमाणमधुना वक्ष्यामि लक्ष्मीपते ।
ये त्वद्ध्यान-गुणानुकीर्तन-रसासक्ता हि भक्ता जना-
स्तेष्वेषा वसति स्थिरैव दयितप्रस्ताव-दत्तादरा ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord! I shall state another reason to show that Goddess Lakshmi is unsteady in abiding with others (including

her own devotees) only because of her enslavement to Thy beauty. For wherever there are Thy devotees immersed in the joy of meditating on Thee and of singing Thy excellences, she is certainly seen to stay with them always, listening attentively to the accounts of her dear Lord sung about or narrated by them.[4]

एवंभूतमनोज्ञतानवसुधा-निष्यन्दसन्दोहनं
त्वद्रूपं परिचिद्रसायनमयं चेतोहरं शृण्वताम् ।
सद्यः प्रेरयते मतिं मदयते रोमाञ्चयत्यङ्गकं
व्यासिञ्चत्यपि शीतबाष्पविसरै-रानन्दमूर्च्छोद्भवैः ॥ 6 ॥

6. This Form of Thine, which consists of pure Bliss-Consciousness and which showers the sweet nectar of fascinating beauty everywhere, captivates the minds of all who devotedly hear the recital of accounts of Thy deeds and excellences, inebriates them with Bliss, excites horripilation all over their limbs, and bathes their bodies with the cool streams of tears welling up from ecstasy of joy.

एवंभूततया हि भक्त्यभिहितो योगः स योगद्वयात्
कर्मज्ञानमयाद्-भृशोत्तमतरो योगीश्वरैर्गीयते ।
सौन्दर्यैक-रसात्मके त्वयि खलु प्रेमप्रकर्षात्मिका
भक्तिर्निःश्रममेव विश्वपुरुषै-र्लभ्या रमावल्लभ ॥ 7 ॥

7. It is for these reasons, O Consort of Lakshmi, that the path of Bhakti (devotion) has been extolled by great sages as superior to the other two paths of Karma and Jnana. For Bhakti, which consists in the feeling of unbounded love for the Pure Beauty that Thou art, is natural to man and is therefore attainable effortlessly by all.

निष्कामं नियतस्वधर्मचरणं यत् कर्मयोगाभिधं
तद्दूरेत्यफलं यदौपनिषद-ज्ञानोपलभ्यं पुनः ।
तत्त्वव्यक्ततया सुदुर्गमतरं चित्तस्य तस्माद्विभो
त्वत्प्रेमात्मक-भक्तिरेव सततं स्वादीयसी श्रेयसी ॥ 8 ॥

8. The path of Karma, which consists in performing the scripture-ordained duties unmotivated by any selfish desires, can become fruitful only at a very distant date. The path of Jnana, according to which an aspirant has to seek the knowledge of Brahman taught in the Upanishads, is very difficult for the mind to pursue because of the abstract and subtle nature of the Truth taught. Therefore, O Universal Being, Bhakti which consists of love for Thee, is always the sweetest and the noblest of the paths.

अत्यायासकराणि कर्मपटला-न्याचर्य निर्यन्मला
बोधे भक्तिपथेऽथवा-प्युचितता-मायान्ति किं तावता ।
क्लिष्ट्वा तर्कपथे परं तव वपु-र्ब्रह्माख्यमन्ये पुन-
श्चित्तार्द्रत्वमृते विचिन्त्य बहुभिः सिध्यन्ति जन्मान्तरैः ॥ 9 ॥

9. By the performance of the very difficult disciplines of Karma, some attain to the purity of mind required for following the path of Jnana or Bhakti. Why then follow such a laborious and indirect path as that of Karma at all (when one can as well start with Bhakti directly)? (But as far as the path of Jnana is concerned, this direct approach is not possible); for those who attempt to do so and strive hard to attain to Thy Impersonal aspect known as Brahman, depending solely on logical reasoning, take limitless time to reach perfection (*i.e.* do not reach it at all), as they lack that mental refinement and purity (born of the discipline of Karma).

त्वद्भक्तिस्तु कथारसामृतझरी-निर्मज्जनेन स्वयं
सिद्ध्यन्ती विमलप्रबोध-पदवीमक्लेशत-स्तन्वती ।
सद्यः सिद्धिकरी जयत्ययि विभो सैवास्तु मे त्वत्पद-
प्रेमप्रौढि-रसार्द्रता द्रुततरं वातालयाधीश्वर ॥ 10 ॥

10. Devotion to Thee, on the other hand, stands unique among the spiritual paths in that it bestows purity and enlightenment directly, without any of the aforesaid difficulties, by submerging one in the flood of delight generated by hearing and remembering Thy deeds and excellences. O Lord of Guruvayoor! May I soon attain that tenderness of heart produced by intense love for Thy feet!

CANTO 3

THE SUPPLIANT DEVOTEE

पठन्तो नामानि प्रमदभरसिन्धौ निपतिताः
स्मरन्तो रूपं ते वरद कथयन्तो गुणकथाः ।
चरन्तो ये भक्ता-स्त्वयि खलु रमन्ते परमम्-
नहं धन्यान् मन्ये समधिगत-सर्वाभिलषितान् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Bestower of Boons! I consider them as really blessed who repeat Thy Names until they are submerged in the ocean of bliss, whose minds unceasingly meditate on Thy Form, whose speech is ever occupied with the narration of Thy deeds and excellences, and who, though always moving about without any fixed habitation, feel all their wants fulfilled by being immersed in the joy that Thou art.

गदक्लिष्टं कष्टं तव चरणसेवारसभरे-
ऽप्यनासक्तं चित्तं भवति बत विष्णो कुरु दयाम् ।
भवत्पादाम्भोज-स्मरणरसिको नामनिवहा-
नहं गायं गायं कुहचन विवत्स्यामि विजने ॥ 2 ॥

2. O All-pervading Being! Bestow Thy grace on me who find that my mind, owing to the affliction of disease, feels no taste even for the intense joy of Thy service. If Thou art gracious to me (and removest the distractions of this painful disease), I shall seek oblivion in some uninhabitated corner of the country and spend my time ever immersed in the joy of contemplating on Thee and of repeating Thy countless names and attributes.

कृपा ते जाता चेत् किमिव न हि लभ्यं तनुभृतां
मदीयक्लेशौघ-प्रशमनदशा नाम कियती ।
न के के लोकेऽस्मि-न्ननिशमयि शोकाभिरहिता
भवद्भक्ता मुक्ताः सुखगति-मसक्ता विदधते ॥ 3 ॥

3. If Thou art propitious, what is it that man cannot attain to! How trifling it is for Thy grace to eradicate all my ailments! Numerous are Thy devotees who have approached Thee without any desires and have been blessed with freedom from their worldly woes, as also with the blissful state of liberation.

मुनिप्रौढा रूढा जगति खलु गूढात्मगतयो
भवत्पादाम्भोज-स्मरणविरुजो नारदमुखाः ।
चरन्तीश स्वैरं सततपरिनिर्भात-परचित्-
सदानन्दाद्वैत-प्रसरपरिमग्नाः किमपरम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Great sages like Narada, having overcome all their early handicaps through contemplation on Thee and becoming established in the Truth of the subtle Atman, are moving about everywhere in complete freedom, ever immersed in the unabating and indivisible flow of Bliss-Consciousness that the Non-dual Brahman is. What other state is there superior to this!

भवद्भक्तिः स्फीता भवतु मम सैव प्रशमये-
दशेषक्लेशौघं न खलु हृदि सन्देहकणिका ।
न चेद्व्यासस्योक्ति-स्तव च वचनं नैगमवचो
भवेन्मिथ्या रथ्यापुरुषवचन-प्रायमखिलम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. May my devotion to Thee become perfect! I have not got the slightest doubt that it will remove all my sufferings. For, if it does not, the utterances of Vyasa, of Thyself and of the Vedas too will, indeed, be no better than the casual words of street urchins!

भवद्भक्ति-स्तावत् प्रमुखमधुरा त्वद्गुणरसात्
किमप्यारूढा चेदखिलपरिताप-प्रशमनी ।
पुनश्चान्ते स्वान्ते विमल-परिबोधोदयमिल-
न्महानन्दाद्वैतं दिशति किमतः प्रार्थ्यमपरम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Devotion to Thee is suffused with sweetness even at the beginning of its practice owing to the influence of Thy

sweet attributes on it. With its progress, it removes all one's woes; and in its maturity, it awakens one from the sleep of ignorance and bestows the supreme Bliss of Non-dual Consciousness. What else is there to seek for!

विधूय क्लेशान् मे कुरु चरणयुग्मं धृतरसं
भवत्क्षेत्रप्राप्तौ करमपि च ते पूजनविधौ ।
भवन्मूर्त्यालोके नयनमथ ते पादतुलसी-
परिघ्राणे घ्राणं श्रवणमपि ते चारुचरिते ।। 7 ।।

7. O Lord! Remove my affliction so that my feet may find delight in going on pilgrimage to Thy temples, my hands in worshipping Thee, my eyes in viewing Thy image, my organ of smell in breathing the fragrance of the Tulasi leaves offered at Thy feet, and my ears in hearing narrations of Thy charming deeds and excellences!

प्रभूताधिव्याधि-प्रसभचलिते मामकहृदि
त्वदीयं तद्रूपं परमसुख-चिद्रूपमुदियात् ।
उदञ्चद्रोमाञ्चो गलितबहुहर्षा-श्रुनिवहो
यथा विस्मर्यासं दुरुपशमपीडा-परिभवान् ।। 8 ।।

8. In my mind that is extremely agitated by worries and disease, may the vision of Thy entrancing Form of pure Bliss-Consciousness arise, so that, with thrills all over my body and tears flowing in profusion owing to that marvellous experience, I may become completely oblivious to my endless woes.

मरुद्गेहाधीश त्वयि खलु पराञ्चोऽपि सुखिनो
भवत्स्नेही सोऽहं सुबहु परितप्ये च किमिदम् ।
अकीर्तिस्ते माभूद्वरद गदभारं प्रशमयन्
भवद्भक्तोत्तंसं झटिति कुरु मां कंसदमन ।। 9 ।।

9. O Lord of the Abode of Winds (Guruvayoor)! Even men who are indifferent to Thee are seen to lead a happy life. But I, a devotee of Thine, am undergoing various sufferings. Why this anomaly, O Bestower of Boons! Won't

this tarnish Thy reputation? Therefore, O Slayer of Kamsa, eradicate my disease and enable me to be the best of Thy devotees!

किमुक्तैर्भूयोभिस्तव हि करुणा यावदुदिया-
दहं तावद्देव प्रहितविविधार्त-प्रलपितः ।
पुरः क्लृप्ते पादे वरद तव नेष्यामि दिवसान्
यथाशक्ति व्यक्तं नतिनुतिनिषेवा विरचयन् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Bestower of Boons! Of what avail is mere talk? Until Thy grace descends on me, I shall, in place of bemoaning my fate, spend my days before this image, Thy manifested Form, devoting my time to prostrating before Thee, singing Thy praise, and performing Thy service to the best of my ability.

CANTO 4

THE PROGRESS OF THE SPIRITUAL ASPIRANT

कल्यतां मम कुरुष्व तावतीं कल्यते भवदुपासनं यया ।
स्पष्टमष्टविध-योगचर्यया पुष्टयाऽऽशु तव तुष्टिमाप्नुयाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. May I be endowed with that much of health as is needed for Thy adoration. Soon shall I then win Thy grace by undergoing the well-known eight-limbed discipline of Yoga.

ब्रह्मचर्य-दृढतादिभिर्यमै-राप्लवादिनियमैश्च पाविताः ।
कुर्महे दृढममी सुखासनं पङ्कजाद्यमपि वा भवत्पराः ॥ 2 ॥

2. After attaining to purity of being through the observance of disciplines of self-control like strict continence, (Brahmacharya) etc. as also rules of right conduct like daily baths (Saucha) etc., I shall practise the various comfortable and steady sitting postures like Padmasana for meditation on Thee.

तारमन्त्रनुचिन्त्य सन्ततं प्राणवायु-मभियम्य निर्मलाः ।
इन्द्रियाणि विषयादथापहृ-त्याऽऽस्महे भवदुपासनोन्मुखाः ॥ ३ ॥

3. Constantly revolving in mind the sacred syllable Om, and regulating the operation of Prana through control of breath, I, having attained to purity of being through these disciplines, shall withdraw the senses from their objects as a preparatory discipline for the practice of meditation on Thee.

अस्फुटे वपुषि ते प्रयत्नतो धारयेम धिषणां मुहुर्मुहुः ।
तेन भक्तिरस-मन्तरार्द्रता-मुद्वहेम भवदङ्घ्रिचिन्तकाः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Engaged in Thy contemplation, I shall, with great effort, fix my mind on the hazily perceived Form of Thine, until the mind is filled with the sentiment of devotion and attains to utmost softness.

विस्फुटावयव-भेदसुन्दरं त्वद्वपुस्सुचिर-शीलनावशात् ।
अश्रमं मनसि चिन्तयामहे ध्यानयोगनिरता-स्त्वदाश्रयाः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Devoting myself to meditation, I, Thy devotee, shall, by long practice, be able to get an easy mental perception of Thy Form of beauty with all its parts vivid and clear.

ध्यायतां सकलमूर्तिमीदृशी-मुन्मिषन्मधुरता-हृतात्मनाम् ।
सान्द्रमोद-रसरूपमान्तरं ब्रह्मरूपमयि तेऽवभासते ॥ 6 ॥

6. To one who meditates thus on Thy formful aspect and becomes captivated by the increasingly vivid experience of its sweetness, there shines in due course Thy Impersonal Brahmic Consciousness, which is of the form of intense inward joy (that is not based on any contact with external objects).

तत्समास्वदन-रूपिणीं स्थितिं त्वत्समाधिमयि विश्वनायक ।
आश्रिताः पुनरतः परिच्युता-वारभेमहि च धारणादिकम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Lord of the Universe! Being established in Samadhi, which is the state of immediate experience of Thee, I shall, whenever my mind slips down from that experience,

resort again to Dharana (the fixing of the mind) and other processes of concentration.

इत्थमभ्यसन-निर्भरोल्लस-त्त्वत्परात्मसुख-कल्पितोत्सवाः ।
मुक्तभक्तकुल-मौलितां गताः सञ्चरेम शुकनारदादिवत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. May I, being established through spiritual practice in the perpetual mart of Joy that Thy Brahmic Consciousness is, be granted the unique blessing of moving about, like Suka and Narada, as an enlightened and liberated devotee of Thine![5]

त्वत्समाधिविजये तु यः पुन-र्मङ्क्षु मोक्षरसिकः क्रमेण वा ।
योगवश्यमनिलं षडाश्रयै-रुन्नयत्यज सुषुम्नया शनैः ॥ 9 ॥

9. If, after mastering Samadhi, an aspirant, whether he wants immediate or gradual liberation, can in either case progress to his goal through several spiritual planes by slowly raising his vital energy, brought under control by Yogic practice, through the six centres along the Sushumna nerve channel.

लिङ्गदेहमपि संत्यजन्नथो लीयते त्वयि परे निराग्रहः ।
ऊर्ध्वलोक-कुतुकी तु मूर्धत-स्सार्धमेव करणैर्निरीयते ॥ 10 ॥

10. One who is desireless abandons his subtle body also at death and is dissolved into Thy Being. But one who entertains desires for the higher spiritual realms, passes out with his subtle body through the Brahma-randhra (orifice of Brahman) in the crown of the head.

अग्नि-वासर-वलर्क्षपक्षगै-रुत्तरायण-जुषा च दैवतैः ।
प्रापितो रविपदं भवत्परो मोदवान् ध्रुवपदान्तमीयते ॥ 11 ॥

11. A devotee of the latter type is led by the deities presiding over Fire, Daytime, Bright Fortnight and Northern Solar Migration to the plane of the Sun, and after he has enjoyed the facilities afforded in each realm, is next led to the sphere of Dhruva.

आस्थितोऽथ महरालये यदा शेषवक्त्र-दहनोष्मणाऽर्द्यते ।
ईयते भवदुपाश्रय-स्तदा वेधसः पदमतः पुरैव वा ॥ 12 ॥

12. After having attained to Mahar-loka from the Dhruva-loka and stayed there for long, he (along with its other inhabitants) moves to the plane of Brahma (Brahma-loka) when he begins to feel the all-consuming heat coming out of the mouth of Sesha at the approach of cosmic dissolution (occurring at the close of Brahma's day). Or he may reach there even earlier than the approach of cosmic dissolution.[5]

तत्र वा तव पदेऽथवा वसन् प्राकृतप्रलय एति मुक्तताम् ।
स्वेच्छया खलु पुराऽपि मुच्यते संविभिद्य जगदण्डमोजसा ॥ 13 ॥

13. While residing in Brahma-loka or Vaikuntha (the heaven of Vishnu) he attains to liberation from embodied existence when all the manifested realms are dissolved at the close of Brahma's day (Brahma-pralaya). Or he may, by exercise of his own will, pierce the cosmic sphere and attain liberation even earlier.

तस्य च क्षिति-पयो-महोऽनिल-द्यो-महत्प्रकृति-सप्तकावृतीः ।
तत्तदात्मकतया विशन् सुखी याति ते पदमनावृतं विभो ॥ 14 ॥

14. O All-pervading Lord! The seven coverings of the cosmic sphere—earth, water, fire, air, ether, cosmic intelligence and primordial nature — Thy devotee transcends by realising his identity with each of them until Thy State, unobstructed by any barrier, is open to him.

अर्चिरादिगति-मीदृशीं व्रजन् विच्युतिं न भजते जगत्पते ।
सच्चिदात्मक भवद्गुणोदया-नुच्चरन्त-मनिलेश पाहि माम् ॥ 15 ॥

15. O Lord of the Universe! For one who goes to higher planes along the Path of Light described above, there is no downfall. O Lord of Guruvayoor! O Embodiment of Pure Consciousness! Protect me, Thy devotee, who is loudly extolling Thy excellences.

CANTO 5

COSMIC EVOLUTION

व्यक्ताव्यक्तमिदं न किञ्चिदभवत् प्राक्प्राकृत-प्रक्षये
मायायां गुणसाम्यरुद्धविकृतौ त्वय्यागतायां लयम्
नो मृत्युश्च तदामृतं च समभून्नाह्नो न रात्रेः स्थिति-
स्तत्रैकस्त्व-मशिष्यथाः किल परानन्दप्रकाशात्मना ॥ 1 ॥

1. In the beginning, when it was Brahma-pralaya, there was nothing in existence, either gross or subtle. For Maya, Thy cosmic creative power, with its active phase neutralised by the relapse of the three Gunas into equipoise, had gone into the state of latency in Thee. Neither death nor deathlessness, neither day time nor night existed. Only Thou, the One without a second, remained as supreme Bliss-Consciousness.[6]

कालः कर्म गुणाश्च जीवनिवहा विश्वं च कार्यं विभो
चिल्लीलारतिमेयुषि त्वयि तदा निर्लीनतामाययुः ।
तेषां नैव वदन्त्यसत्त्वमयि भोः शक्त्यात्मना तिष्ठतां
नो चेत् किं गगनप्रसूनसदृशां भूयो भवेत् संभवः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Then, Time, Karma (effects of action of Jivas), Prakriti (Nature) and Jivas (souls)—in fact all entities of the nature of effects—had attained dissolution in Thee, whilst Thou didst sport in the Bliss of Pure Consciousness in Thy state of cosmic slumber. The above entities cannot be said to have been naught at that time; they had become only latent in Thy cosmic power. Otherwise, if they had perished and become non-entities like sky-flowers, how could their re-emergence (in the new creative cycle) be possible?

एवं च द्विपरार्धकाल-विगतावीक्षां सिसृक्षात्मिकां
बिभ्राणे त्वयि चुक्षुभे त्रिभुवनीभावाय माया स्वयम् ।
मायातः खलु कालशक्ति-रखिलादृष्टं स्वभावोऽपि च
प्रादुर्भूय गुणान् विकास्य विदधुस्तस्याः सहायक्रियाम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. At the end of two Parardhas, when Thou didst express Thy creative will by Thy look, Thy cosmic power Maya stirred herself into activity for the creation of the three worlds. Out of Maya emerged Time, Totality of impressions of the Karma of Jivas (Adrishta), and Disposition (Swabhava). These acted as aids to the Gunas of Thy Maya (Prakriti) in their diversification as the manifested universe.

मायासन्निहितोऽप्रविष्टवपुषा साक्षीति गीतो भवान्
भेदैस्तां प्रतिबिम्बतो विविशिवान् जीवोऽपि नैवापरः ।
कालादि-प्रतिबोधिताऽथ भवता संचोदिता च स्वयं
माया सा खलु बुद्धितत्त्व-मसृजद्योऽसौ महानुच्यते ॥ 4 ॥

4. It is Thou alone that art extolled in the Vedas as the Witness when Thou abidest by the side of Maya without entering into it. When Thou art reflected in the diversities of adjuncts (Upadhis) provided by Maya, that reflection is called Jiva (individual soul). The Jiva has thus no independent existence. Again, Maya, Thy Cosmic Power, manifested as the energies of Time and the rest, and directed by Thee, projects the category of Intelligence, which is also called Mahat.[7]

तत्रासौ त्रिगुणात्मकोऽपि च महान् सत्त्वप्रधानः स्वयं
जीवेऽस्मिन् खलु निर्विकल्प-महमित्युद्बोध-निष्पादकः ।
चक्रेऽस्मिन् सविकल्पबोधक-महन्तत्वं महान् खल्वसौ
सम्पुष्टं त्रिगुणै-स्तमोऽतिबहुलं विष्णो भवत्प्रेरणात् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Although a product of Prakriti with its constituent Gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. the Mahat is predominated by Sattva, the pure aspect of Prakriti, and is capable of generating only a vague 'I-sense' without any particularity of species, individuality, status etc. O Lord! By Thy will, out of this Mahat was evolved the category of Ahamkara, (Egoity), which has all the Gunas manifest but with Tamas predominating and having therefore the capacity to generate the particularised 'I-sense' that makes one aware of one's distinct individuality, species, status, relationships etc.

सोऽहं च त्रिगुणक्रमात् त्रिविधता-मासाद्य वैकारिको
भूयस्तैजस-तामसाविति भवन्नाद्येन सत्त्वात्मना ।
देवानिन्द्रिय-मानिनोऽकृत दिशा-वातार्क-पाश्यश्विनो
वह्नीन्द्राच्युत-मित्रकान् विधु-विधि-श्रीरुद्रशारीरकान् ॥ 6 ॥

6. The category of Ahamkara (Egoity), by virtue of the triune Gunas constituting it, became divided into three—the Vaikarika, Taijasa, and Tamasa forms of Ahamkara. Out of the first of these, namely, Vaikarika, which is predominated by Sattva, the deities presiding over the ten organs (Indriyas) were created. These gods are—Dik, Vayu, Aditya, Varuna and Aswini Devas, being the deities presiding over the five organs of knowledge *viz.* hearing, touch, sight, taste and smell respectively; Agni, Indra, Upendra, Mitra and Prajapati, being the deities presiding over the five organs of action *viz.* vocal organ, hands, feet, anus and generative organ respectively; and Chandra (moon), Brahma, Rudra and Kshetrajna (Indwelling Spirit), being the deities presiding over the mind, intellect, ego (Ahamkara) and mind stuff (Chitta) respectively.

भूमन् मानस-बुद्ध्यहंकृतिमिल-च्चित्ताख्य-वृत्त्यन्वितं
तच्चान्तःकरणं विभो तव बलात् सत्त्वांश एवासृजत् ।
जातस्तैजसतो दशेन्द्रियगण-स्तत्तामसांशात्पुन-
स्तन्मात्रं नभसो मरुत्पुरपते शब्दोऽजनि त्वद्बलात् ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Lord! By Thy power, the same Vaikarika, the product of the Sattva aspect of Ahamkara, generated that well-known entity called the internal organ (Antahkarana) with its four modes described as mind (Manas), intellect (Buddhi), ego sense (Ahamkara) and mind-stuff (Chitta). Taijasa, the product of the Rajasa aspect of Ahamkara, produced the ten organs, five of knowledge and five of action, and out of the Tamasa aspect originated sound (Sabda), the subtle essence (Tanmatra) of Akasa (Sky).

शब्दाद्व्योम ततः ससर्जिथ विभो स्पर्शं ततो मारुतं
तस्माद्रूपमतो महोऽथ च रसं तोयं च गन्धं महीम् ।

एवं माधव पूर्वपूर्वकलना-दाद्याद्य-धर्मान्वितं
भूतग्राममिमं त्वमेव भगवन् प्राकाशय-स्तामसात् ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Lord! From the subtle essence of Sabda (Sound) came the element Sky. From the element Sky, came the subtle essence of Sparsa (Touch), and from it, the element Air (Marut). From the element Air arose the subtle essence of Form (Rupa), and from it, the element of Fire (Tejas). From the element of Fire came the subtle essence of Taste (Rasa), and from it the element Water (Jala). From the element Water came the subtle essence of Smell, and from it the element Earth (Prithvi). Thus out of the Tamasa aspect of Ahamkara, Thou didst bring into existence all the elements, each of them manifesting its own special quality and also inheriting the qualities of the preceding elements and transmitting them all to the succeeding one.

एते भूतगणा-स्तथेन्द्रियगणा देवाश्च जाता पृथङ्-
नो शेकु-र्भुवनाण्ड-निर्मितिविधौ देवैरमीभि-स्तदा ।
त्वं नानाविध-सूक्तिभिर्नुतगुण-स्तत्त्वान्यमून्याविशं-
श्चेष्टाशक्ति-मुदीर्य तानि घटयन् हैरण्यमण्डं व्यधाः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Even though all the elements, sense organs, and their presiding deities had come into existence, they were disparate and so unable to produce the Cosmic Whole. Therefore, the deities praised Thee by various hymns and sought Thy help, whereupon Thou didst enter into these categories and activate them and combine them into the Hiranyagarbha, the Golden Egg, containing all the worlds in potentiality.

अण्डं तत् खलु पूर्वसृष्टसलिलेऽतिष्ठत् सहस्रं समाः
निर्भिन्द-न्नकृथाश्चतुर्दश-जगद्रूपं विराडाह्वयम् ।
साहस्रैः करपादमूर्धनिवहै-र्निश्शेषजीवात्मको
निर्भातोऽसि मरुत्पुराधिप स मां त्रायस्व सर्वामयात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. After the Cosmic Egg had subsisted in the already created Cosmic Waters for a thousand years, Thou didst break it open and shape it into the fourteen spheres, wherein Thou dost manifestest Thyself in Thy Cosmic Form as All-life

with countless hands, legs and heads. O Lord of Guruvayoor, who didst thus manifest the categories! Deign to rid me of all my ailments!

CANTO 6

COSMOS AS FORM OF THE LORD

एवं चतुर्दश-जगन्मयतां गतस्य
पातालमीश तव पादतलं वदन्ति ।
पादोर्ध्वदेशमपि देव रसातलं ते
गुल्फद्वयं खलु महातल-मद्भुतात्मन ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord of Wondrous Form! Of Thee who hast manifested as the fourteen spheres, Patala is the lower surface of Thy feet; Rasatala, the upper surface; and Mahatala, the ankles.

जङ्घे तलातलमथो सुतलं च जानू
किञ्चोरुभागयुगलं वितलातले द्वे ।
क्षोणीतलं जघनमम्बरमङ्ग नाभि-
र्वक्षश्च शक्रनिलयस्तव चक्रपाणे ॥ 2 ॥

2. Thy shins is Talatala; knees, Sutala; the buttocks, Vitala and Atala; the hip, the Bhuloka (earth); the navel, the Brahmaloka; and the chest, the Svarloka constituting the heaven of Indra.

ग्रीवा महस्तव मुखं च जनस्तपस्तु
फालं शिरस्तव समस्तमयस्य सत्यम् ।
एवं जगन्मयतनो जगदाश्रितैर-
प्यन्यैर्निबद्धवपुषे भगवन् नमस्ते ॥ 3 ॥

3. O All-inclusive Being! Thy neck is constituted of Maharloka; Thy face, of Janaloka; Thy forehead, of Tapoloka;

and Thy head, of Satyaloka. Salutation to Thee, who art embodied as the whole universe, including some other entities (to be mentiond hereafter)!

त्वद्ब्रह्मरन्ध्रपदमीश्वर विश्वकन्द-
छन्दांसि केशव घनास्तव केशपाशाः ।
उल्लासिचिल्लियुगलं द्रुहिणस्य गेहं
पक्ष्माणि रात्रिदिवसौ सविता च नेत्रे ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord! Thou who art the source of the universe! The Vedas are Thy Brahma-randhra (psychic orifice) on the crown of the head; the clouds are Thy lock of hair; Thy eyebrows are the abode of Brahma; Thy eye-lashes are night and day; and Thy eyes form the sun (and the moon).

निश्शेषविश्वरचना च कटाक्षमोक्षः
कर्णौ दिशोऽश्वियुगलं तव नासिके द्वे ।
लोभत्रपे च भगव-न्नधरोत्तरोष्ठौ
तारागणाश्च दशनाश्शमनश्च दंष्ट्रा ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord! A glance of Thy eye constitutes creation; Thy ears are the quarters; Thy two nasal orifices are the pair of Asvinis; Thy two lips are greed and modesty; Thy teeth are the stars; and Thy molars form Death the leveller.

माया विलासहसितं श्वसितं समीरो
जिह्वा जलं वचनमीश शकुन्तपङ्क्तिः ।
सिद्धादयःस्वरगणा मुखरन्ध्रमग्नि-
र्देवा भुजाः स्तनयुगं तव धर्मदेवः ॥ 6 ॥

6. O Lord! Thy smile is Maya which infatuates all beings; Thy breath is wind; Thy tongue is water; Thy speech is formation of birds; Thy tunes are the Siddhas and other divine artistes; Thy mouth is fire; Thy arms are the gods; and Dharma-deva (god of righteousness) is Thy breasts.

पृष्ठं त्वधर्म इह देव मनःसुधांशु-
रव्यक्तमेव हृदयाम्बुज-मम्बुजाक्ष ।

कुक्षिःसमुद्रनिवहा वसनं तु सन्ध्ये
शेफः प्रजापतिरसौ वृषणौ च मित्रः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Lord! Adharma (unrighteousness) is Thy back, the moon is Thy mind; undifferentiated Nature (Avyakta) is Thy heart-lotus; the ocean is Thy abdomen; the two Sandhyas are Thy garment; Prajapati is Thy generative organ; and god Mitra forms Thy testicles.

श्रोणीस्थलं मृगगणाः पदयोर्नखास्ते
हस्त्युष्ट्रसैन्धवमुखा गमनं तु कालः ।
विप्रादिवर्णभवनं वदनाब्जबाहु-
चारूरुयुग्मचरणं करुणाम्बुधे ते ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Merciful One! The back of Thy waist forms the animal world; Thy foot nails constitute the species of animals like elephants, camels, horses etc; Thy movement is Time; and Thy face, arms, thighs, and feet are the sources of the four Varnas of Brahmanas and others.

संसारचक्रमयि चक्रधर क्रियास्ते
वीर्यं महासुरगणोऽस्थिकुलानि शैलाः ।
नाड्यःसरित्समुदयस्तरवश्च रोम
जीयादिदं वपुरनिर्वचनीयमीश ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Wielder of the discus! This Samsara (repetitive cycle of births and deaths) is Thy activity; Thy prowess is constituted of the host of great Asuras; Thy bones are the mountain ranges; Thy blood vessels are the river systems; and the trees are Thy hair. May this unique and indescribable Form of Thine shine within me!

ईदृग्जगन्मय-वपुस्तव कर्मभाजां
कर्मावसानसमये स्मरणीयमाहुः ।
तस्यान्तरात्मवपुषे विमलात्मने ते
वातालयाधिप नमोऽस्तु निरुन्धि रोगान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. This Cosmic Form of Thine is fit to be meditated upon by embodied beings who are subject to Karma, when they approach the end of their subjection to Karma *i.e.* begin to aspire earnestly for liberation. (Or alternatively: This Cosmic Form of Thine is fit to be meditated upon towards the close of their worship and other devotional duties by persons who practise such disciplines). O Purity Embodied! O Lord of Guruvayoor! To Thee, the indwelling spirit of this Cosmic Form, my salutations! May my ailments be eradicated!

CANTO 7

BRAHMA COMMANDED TO CREATE

एवं देव चतुर्दशात्मक-जगद्रूपेण जातः पुन-
स्तस्योर्ध्वं खलु सत्यलोकनिलये जातोऽसि धाता स्वयम् ।
यं शंसन्ति हिरण्यगर्भ-मखिलत्रैलोक्य-जीवात्मकं
योऽभूत् स्फीतरजो-विकार-विकस-न्नाना-सिसृक्षारसः ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Thou, who hadst thus become the universe of fourteen planes, didst manifest Thyself again as Brahma in Satyaloka, the loftiest and the subtlest of all the planes. Brahma, renowned as Hiranyagarbha (Cosmic Golden Egg) and as the Collective Soul of the worlds, was prompted by the upsurge of Rajas (passion) to engage himself in multitudinous creation.

सोऽयं विश्वविसर्ग-दत्तहृदयः सम्पश्यमानः स्वयं
बोधं खल्वनवाप्य विश्वविषयं चिन्ताकुलस्तस्थिवान् ।
तावत् त्वं जगतां पते तप तपे-त्येवं हि वैहायसीं
वाणीमेन-मशिश्रवः श्रुतिसुखां कुर्वंस्तपःप्रेरणाम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Brahma, contemplating within himself with a heart set on creation, was very much disconcerted when on his own he could not conceive in his mind the scheme of the world to be created by him. O Lord of all creation! Thou didst

then prompt him to perform austerities, exhorting him in a sweet disembodied voice, ' Engage yourself in Tapas.'

कोऽसौ मामवदत् पुमानिति जलापूर्णे जगन्मण्डले
दिक्षूद्वीक्ष्य किमप्यनीक्षितवता वाक्यार्थमुत्पश्यता ।
दिव्यं वर्षसहस्रमात्ततपसा तेन त्वमाराधित-
स्तस्मै दर्शितवानसि स्वनिलयं वैकुण्ठमेकाद्भुतम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. ' Who is it that addresses me thus when the whole of existence is engulfed in Waters? ' thinking thus, he looked around but could find none. But understanding the meaning of the words, he worshipped Thee for a thousand divine years through concentration, and Thou wert then pleased to reveal to him Thy unique abode known as Vaikuntha.

माया यत्र कदापि नो विकुरुते भाते जगद्भ्यो बहिः
शोक-क्रोध-विमोह-साध्वस-मुखा भावास्तु दूरं गताः ।
सान्द्रानन्दझरी च यत्र परम-ज्योतिःप्रकाशात्मके
तत् ते धाम विभावितं विजयते वैकुण्ठरूपं विभो ॥ 4 ॥

4. Transcending the fourteen planes, beyond the pale of Maya's influence, and out of bounds to mental modes like sorrow, anger, infatuation, fear and the like, shines Thy Abode of Vaikuntha, constituted of the splendour of the supreme light of Consciousness, wherein there is the constant flow of saturated Brahmic Bliss.

यस्मिन् नाम चतुर्भुजा हरिमणि-श्यामावदातत्विषो
नानाभूषण-रत्नदीपितदिशो राजद्विमानालयाः ।
भक्तिप्राप्त-तथाविधोन्नतपदा दीव्यन्ति दिव्या जना-
स्तत्ते धाम निरस्तसर्वशमलं वैकुण्ठरूपं जयेत् ॥ 5 ॥

5. It is resplendent with towered residences inhabited by heavenly beings with four hands, whose bodies have the brilliant deep blue hue of Indraneela gems (sapphire), and the lustre of whose diamond-studded ornaments is lighting up the quarters. It is by virtue of deep devotion to Thee that they have attained to this rare privilege of residence in this

Abode of Thine. Victory to Thy Abode of Vaikuntha unaffected by any sin!

नानादिव्यवधूजनै-रभिवृता विद्युल्लता-तुल्यया
बिश्वोन्मादन-हृद्यगात्रलतया विद्योतिताशान्तरा ।
त्वत्पादाम्बुज-सौरभैककुतुकाल्लक्ष्मीः स्वयं लक्ष्यते
यस्मिन् विस्मयनीय-दिव्यविभवं तत् ते पदं देहि मे ॥ 6 ॥

6. Grant unto me the blessing of residence in that Abode of Thine abounding with unique excellences, wherein is seen Lakshmi, (Thy consort and Mother of the universe, praised in the scripture as the goddess of beauty, wealth and good fortune) —Lakshmi who is surrounded by numerous divine female attendants, whose form is tender like a creeper but stuns all by its charming and explosive beauty which lights up all the quarters like a streak of lightning, and whose sole delight consists in serving Thy lotus-feet and enjoying their fragrance.

तत्रैवं प्रतिदर्शिते निजपदे रत्नासनाध्यासितं
भास्वत्कोटि-लसत्किरीट-कटकाद्याकल्प-दीप्राकृति ।
श्रीवत्साङ्कित-भास्वत्कौस्तुभमणि-च्छायारुणं कारणं
विश्वेषां तव रूपमैक्षत विधिस्तत्ते विभो भातु मे ॥ 7 ॥

7. In Thy Abode of Vaikuntha thus revealed, Brahma saw Thee, the source of all creation, seated on a throne of diamonds, shining amidst the brilliance like that of a thousand suns emanating from Thy diadem, bracelets and other decorations, and revealing the auspicious mark of Srivatsa on Thy chest rendered crimson by the lustre of the jewel Kausthubha worn on Thy neck. May this form of Thine be revealed to me!

कालाम्भोद-कलायकोमलरुची-चक्रेण चक्रं दिशा-
मावृण्वान-मुदारमन्दहसित-स्यन्दप्रसन्नाननम् ।
राजत्कम्बु-गदारिपङ्कजधर-श्रीमद्भुजामण्डलं
स्रष्टुस्तुष्टिकरं वपुस्तव विभो मद्रोगमुद्वासयेत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. With a brilliant and expansive halo illumining the quarters with its sombre radiance resembling that of fresh rain clouds and of blue lotuses; with a calm face beaming with an attractive smile constantly playing on it; and with four arms holding the shining conch, mace, discus and lotus,—Thy form did give great joy to Brahma. May it eradicate my ailments also!

दृष्ट्वा सम्भृतसम्भ्रमः कमलभू-स्त्वत्पादपाथोरुहे
हर्षविशवशंवदो निपतितः प्रीत्या कृतार्थीभवन् ।
जानास्येव मनीषितं मम विभो ज्ञानं तदापादय
द्वैताद्वैत-भवत्स्वरूपपरमि-त्याचष्ट तं त्वां भजे ॥ 9 ॥

9. Overwhelmed with astonishment at that sight, the Lotus-born One (Brahma) fell at Thy feet, full of the joy and satisfaction of having attained to the fulfilment of his existence. He said 'O Lord! Thou knowest already the object I have in mind. Vouchsafe unto me a true understanding of Thy mysterious nature in which duality and non-duality exist in harmony.' To that Supreme Being, revealed to Brahma, my adoration!

आताम्रे चरणे विनम्रमथ तं हस्तेन हस्ते स्पृशन्
बोधस्ते भविता न सर्गविधिभि-र्बन्धोऽपि सञ्जायते ।
इत्याभाष्य गिरं प्रतोष्य नितरां तच्चित्तगूढः स्वयं
सृष्टौ तं समुदैरयः स भगवन्नुल्लासयोल्लाघताम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Touching with Thy own hands the hands of Brahma who had prostrated himself in all humility at Thy crimson-tinged feet, Thou didst declare, 'You will have knowledge of My true nature. By engaging yourself in creation you will not be stained by attachments.' Gladdening the heart of Brahma by these words, Thou didst become immanent in his mind in order to direct him in the work of creation. Thou, O Lord, who art of such mighty powers! Deign to ameliorate my sufferings.

CANTO 8

THE DAWN OF CREATION

एवं तावत् प्राकृतप्रक्षयान्ते
ब्राह्मे कल्पे ह्यादिमे लब्धजन्मा ।
ब्रह्मा भूयस्त्वत्त एवाप्य वेदान्
सृष्टिं चक्रे पूर्वकल्पोपमानाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Thus at the close of Brahma-Pralaya (total dissolution) and the beginning of the new cycle of creation that is now prevailing, a new Brahma, having come into being on the first day of the cycle, obtained the knowledge of the Vedas from Thyself and began the work of creation in consonance with what had prevailed in the previous Kalpa (cosmic period).[8]

सोऽयं चतुर्युगसहस्र-मितान्यहानि
तावन्मिताश्च रजनीर्बहुशो निनाय ।
निद्रात्यसौ त्वयि निलीय समं स्वसृष्टै-
र्नैमित्तिकप्रलय-माहुरतोऽस्य रात्रिम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. This Brahma has already spent several days and nights of his life, each day consisting of a thousand Chatur-yugas and each night too of an equally long period. During his night when Brahma falls into sleep, he along with all his creation becomes latent in Thee. This night of Brahma is called Naimittika-pralaya (*i.e.* dissolution caused by Brahma's sleep).

अस्मादृशां पुनरहर्मुखकृत्यतुल्यां
सृष्टिं करोत्यनुदिनं स भवत्प्रसादात् ।
प्राग्ब्राह्मकल्पजनुषां च परायुषां तु
सुप्तप्रबोधनसमाऽस्ति तदापि सृष्टिः ॥ 3 ॥

3. Thus at the dawn of every day of his, Brahma, by Thy grace, commences the work of creation, just as we mortals begin our work at dawn. At the dawn of Brahma's day,

those eternal souls who existed even before Brahma-kalpa (like Markandeya and others) also arise like people from sleep with the full consciousness of their past.

पञ्चाशदब्दमधुना स्ववयोऽर्धरूप-

मेकं परार्धमतिवृत्य हि वर्ततेऽसौ ।

तत्रान्त्यरात्रि-जनितान् कथयामि भूमन्

पश्चाद्दिनावतरणे च भवद्विलासान् ॥ 4 ॥

4. The Brahma ruling over the present cycle, having spent fifty divine years, which represent the first half of his span of life, has just entered into the second half of it. O Lord! I am now narrating Thy sportive activities that took place during the previous night of Brahma and the beginning of his first day in the second half of his life.

दिनावसानेऽथ सरोजयोनिः

सुषुप्तिकामस्त्वयि सन्निलिल्ये ।

जगन्ति च त्वज्जठरं समीयु-

स्तदेद-मेकार्णवमास विश्वम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. At the end of his day the Lotus-born Brahma, desiring to sleep, got merged in Thee. The whole cosmos too was absorbed in Thy abdomen. Only the Causal Waters remained.

तवैव वेषे फणिराजि शेषे

जलैकशेषे भुवने स्म शेषे ।

आनन्दसान्द्रा-नुभवस्वरूपः

स्वयोगनिद्रा-परिमुद्रितात्मा ॥ 6 ॥

6. When the whole universe was reduced to the Causal Waters, Thou, who art of the nature of saturated Bliss-Consciousness, didst rest, wrapt in Yogic slumber, on the serpent-bed of Adisesha, who is but another manifestation of Thyself.

कालाख्यशक्तिं प्रलयावसाने

प्रबोधये-त्यादिशता किलादौ ।

त्वया प्रसुप्तं परिसुप्तशक्ति-

व्रजेन तत्राखिल-जीवधाम्ना ॥ 7 ॥

7. At the start of the Pralaya, Thou, in whom all energies had become latent along with all the Jivas, didst enter into sleep, ordering the power called Time to awaken Thee at the end of the Pralaya.

चतुर्युगाणां च सहस्रमेवं

त्वयि प्रसुप्ते पुनरद्वितीये ।

कालाख्यशक्तिः प्रथमप्रबुद्धा

प्राबोधयत् त्वां किल विश्वनाथ ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Master of all the worlds! Thou, the One without a second, having slept for a period of a thousand Chaturyugas, wert awakened by the power of Time, which was the first entity to wake up at the end of the Pralaya.

विबुध्य च त्वं जलगर्भशायिन्

विलोक्य लोकानखिलान् प्रलीनान् ।

तेष्वेव सूक्ष्मात्मतया निजान्तः-

स्थितेषु विश्वेषु ददाथ दृष्टिम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Thou Slumberer in the Waters! Waking up, Thou didst see all the worlds to have gone into dissolution. But as they were all only residing in Thee in a state of latency, Thou didst now cast Thy glance on them all collectively in one sweep.

ततस्त्वदीयादयि नाभिरन्ध्रा-

दुदञ्चितं किंचन दिव्यपद्मम् ।

निलीन-निश्शेष-पदार्थमाला-

संक्षेपरूपं मुकुलायमानम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord! Then there came out of Thy navel a lotus bud of great brilliance containing in itself all the previously existent entities in their potential form.

तदेतदम्भोरुह-कुड्मलं ते
कलेबरात् तोयपथे प्ररूढम् ।
बहिर्निरीतं परितः स्फुरद्भिः
स्वधामभि-र्ध्वान्तमलं न्यकृन्तत् ॥ 11 ॥

11. Originating from Thy navel and rising above the flood of Causal Waters, this lotus bud completely dispersed the surrounding darkness by its brilliance.

संफुल्लपत्रे नितरां विचित्रे
तस्मिन् भवद्वीर्यधृते सरोजे ।
स पद्मजन्मा विधिराविरासीत्
स्वयंप्रबुद्धाखिल-वेदराशिः ॥ 12 ॥

12. In that full-blown and wondrous lotus, supported by Thy prowess, there arose the creator Brahma, known as the Lotus-born with the Vedas self-manifested in him.

अस्मिन् परात्मन् ननु पाद्मकल्पे
त्वमित्थ-मुत्थापित-पद्मयोनिः ।
अनन्तभूमा मम रोगराशिं
निरुन्धि वातालयवास विष्णो ॥ 13 ॥

13. O Vishnu, the Supreme Being manifested in the temple of Guruvayoor for blessing devotees! In this age known as Padma-Kalpa Thou didst thus originate the Lotus-born Brahma. O Thou of incomprehensible greatness! Deign to rid me of my ailments!

CANTO 9

BRAHMA IN HIS CREATIVE ROLE

स्थितः स कमलोद्भवस्तव हि नाभिपङ्केरुहे
कुतःस्विदिद-मम्बुधावुदित-मित्यनालोकयन् ।
तदीक्षणकुतूहलात् प्रतिदिशं विवृत्तानन-
श्चतुर्वदनतामगाद् विकसदष्टदृष्टयम्बुजाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Then Brahma, the Lotus-born, though seated in Thy navel-lotus, found it impossible to discover the source of that lotus anywhere in the vast ocean of Causal Waters. Intensely curious to find out the source, he looked around turning his head, whereupon he became endowed with four faces and with eight eyes beautiful like lotus petals.

महार्णवविघूर्णितं कमलमेव तत् केवलं
विलोक्य तदुपाश्रयं तव तनुं तु नालोकयन् ।
क एष कमलोदरे महति निस्सहायो ह्यहं
कुतस्स्विदिदमम्बुजं समजनीति चिन्तामगात् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Seeing only that solitary lotus tossing and quivering in the vast ocean of Causal Waters but not Thee who wert the support of it, he thought, 'Who, indeed, am I seated here alone in this lotus? And from where has this lotus originated?'

अमुष्य हि सरोरुहः किमपि कारणं सम्भवे-
दिति स्म कृतनिश्चयः स खलु नालरन्ध्राध्वना ।
स्वयोगबलविद्यया समवरूढवान् प्रौढधी-
स्त्वदीयमतिमोहनं न तु कलेबरं दृष्टवान् ॥ 3 ॥

3. 'This lotus must have some place of origin', thinking thus, he descended through the stem-hole of the lotus with the help of his supernatural power and knowledge. Though endowed with great capacities and intelligence, he was nevertheless unable to perceive Thy most attractive Form.

ततः सकलनालिका-विवरमार्गगो मार्गयन्
प्रयस्य शतवत्सरं किमपि नैव संदृष्टवान् ।
निवृत्य कमलोदरे सुखनिषण्ण एकाग्रधीः
समाधिबलमादधे भवदनुग्रहैकाग्रही ॥ 4 ॥

4. Searching through all the orifices of the lotus stem for a hundred years, he was not able to see anything as the base of the lotus. So he gave up the search and sat calmly in the lotus, and with one-pointed concentration, resorted to absorption in deep Samadhi, solely desirous of Thy grace.

शतेन परिवत्सरै-र्दृढसमाधि-बन्धोल्लसत्-
प्रबोध-विशदीकृतः स खलु पद्मिनीसम्भवः ।
अदृष्टचरमद्भुतं तव हि रूपमन्तर्दृशा
व्यचष्ट परितुष्टधी-र्भुजगभोग-भागाश्रयम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Practising undisturbed Samadhi for a hundred years and with his understanding thus deepened by a new awakening, the Lotus-born Brahma to his great delight saw with his inner eye a hitherto unseen wonder—Thy Divine Form resting on the serpent-bed of Adisesha.

किरीटमुकुटोल्लसत्-कटक-हार-केयूरयुङ्
मणिस्फुरितमेखलं सुपरिवीतपीताम्बरम् ।
कलायकुसुमप्रभं गलतलोल्लसत्कौस्तुभं
वपुस्तदयि भावये कमलजन्मने दर्शितम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. I meditate on what was revealed to the Lotus-born Brahma—Thy Divine Form shining with a diadem and other decorations on the head; with a pearl necklace, bracelets and Keyura (bracelets for upper arm); with the neatly worn yellow cloth held in its place by a waist-band studded with precious stones; and with a blue complexion resembling that of the Kalaya flower.

श्रुतिप्रकरदर्शित-प्रचुरवैभव श्रीपते
हरे जय जय प्रभो पदमुपैषि दिष्टचा दृशोः ।

कुरुष्व धियमाशु मे भुवननिर्मितौ कर्मठा-
मिति द्रुहिणवर्णित-स्वगुणबंहिमा पाहि माम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'Hail! Hail! unto Thee whose wondrous glory the Vedas have declared, who is the bestower of all that is auspicious and the remover of all ills! It is my rare good fortune that Thou hast revealed Thy Form to me. Now deign to confer on me the intelligence and the capacity required for creating the worlds!' May the Lord possessed of countless excellences as described by Brahma, offer protection to me!

लभस्व भुवनत्रयी-रचनदक्षता-मक्षतां
गृहाण मदनुग्रहं कुरु तपश्च भूयो विधे ।
भवत्वखिलसाधनी मयि च भक्तिरत्युत्कटे-
त्युदीर्य गिरमादधा मुदितचेतसं वेधसम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'O Brahma! May you be endowed with the power of creating the three worlds to faultless perfection! Even after receiving this blessing of Mine, engage yourself in inward concentration (Tapas). May you also have intense devotion to Me, which is the sure means for the achievement of everything!' With these words Thou didst delight Brahma by granting him far more favours than what he had prayed for.

शतं कृततपास्ततः स खलु दिव्यसंवत्सरा-
नवाप्य च तपोबलं मतिबलं च पूर्वाधिकम् ।
उदीक्ष्य किल कम्पितं पयसि पङ्कजं वायुना
भवद्बल-विजृम्भितः पवनपाथसी पीतवान् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Practising inward concentration for a hundred divine years, he gained more of spiritual and mental powers. Next, seeing the Lotus in the Waters swaying in the breeze, he consumed all the Waters and the winds, thanks to Thy power manifesting in him.

तवैव कृपया पुनः सरसिजेन तेनैव सः
प्रकल्प्य भुवनत्रयीं प्रववृते प्रजानिर्मितौ ।

तथाविधकृपाभरो गुरुमरुत्पुराधीश्वर
त्वमाशु परिपाहि मां गुरुदयोक्षितै-रीक्षितैः ॥ 10 ॥

10. By Thy grace, he then engaged himself in the creation of various species of beings, after having first fashioned the Lotus itself into the various spheres of the universe. O Lord of Guruvayoor! O Thou of abounding grace! Give me protection with a glance of Thine over-flowing with mercy.

CANTO 10

DIVERSIFICATION OF CREATION

वैकुण्ठ वर्धितबलोऽथ भवत्प्रसादा-
दम्भोजयोनि-रसृजत् किल जीवदेहान् ।
स्थास्नूनि भूरुहमयाणि तथा तिरश्चां
जातीर्मनुष्यनिवहानपि देवभेदान् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord of Vaikuntha! The Lotus-born Brahma, puissant through Thy blessing, began to create many embodied beings such as vegetation, birds, animals, men, gods etc.

मिथ्याग्रहा-स्मिमति-राग-विकोप-भीति-
रज्ञानवृत्तिमिति पञ्चविधां स सृष्ट्वा ।
उद्दाम- तामसपदार्थ-विधानदून-
स्तेने त्वदीयचरणस्मरणं विशुद्ध्यै ॥ 2 ॥

2. He created five modes of ignorance—false apprehension, self-centredness, attachment, anger, and fear. Stricken with sorrow for having originated these five modes of Tamas (ignorance), he made atonement for it by contemplating on Thy lotus-feet.

तावत् ससर्ज मनसा सनकं सनन्दं
भूयः सनातनमुनिं च सनत्कुमारम् ।

ते सृष्टिकर्मणि तु तेन नियुज्यमाना-
स्त्वत्पादभक्तिरसिका जगृहुर्न वाणीम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Then he created four mind-born offspring—the sages Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana, and Sanatkumara. On being ordered by him to procreate, these sages refused to do so, as their minds were already immersed in devotion to Thee.

तावत् प्रकोपमुदितं प्रतिरुन्धतोऽस्य
भ्रूमध्यतोऽजनि मृडो भवदेकदेशः ।
नामानि मे कुरु पदानि च हा विरिञ्चे-
त्यादौ रुरोद किल तेन स रुद्रनामा ॥ 4 ॥

4. As Brahma tried to suppress his anger at the disobedience of his offspring, Rudra, an aspect of Thine, emerged from the middle of his eyebrows. He is called Rudra, because at his very birth he cried aloud to Brahma, asking to be provided with a name and a habitation for himself.

एकादशाह्वयतया च विभिन्नरूपं
रुद्रं विधाय दयिता वनिताश्च दत्वा ।
तावन्त्यदत्त च पदानि भवत्प्रणुन्नः
प्राह प्रजाविरचनाय च सादरं तम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Brahma, impelled by Thee, gave eleven names and eleven forms to Rudra (thus giving to the one Rudra eleven aspects). He gave to each one of these a wife and a habitation and requested them to procreate.

रुद्राभिसृष्ट-भयदाकृति-रुद्रसङ्घ-
सम्पूर्यमाण-भुवनत्रयभीतचेताः ।
मा मा प्रजाः सृज तपश्चर मङ्गलाये-
त्याचष्ट तं कमलभूर्भवदीरितात्मा ॥ 6 ॥

6. The three worlds were soon full of the fierce-looking progeny of Rudra, which filled Brahma with alarm. There-

upon Brahma, prompted by Thee, ordered Rudra to stop procreating, and betake himself to austerity for the good of the world.

तस्याथ सर्गरसिकस्य मरीचिरत्रि-
स्तत्राङ्गिराः क्रतुमुनिः पुलहः पुलस्त्यः ।
अङ्गादजायत भृगुश्च वसिष्ठदक्षौ
श्रीनारदश्च भगवान् भवदङ्घ्रिदासः ॥ 7 ॥

7. From several parts of the body of Brahma, engrossed in creation, were born the sages, Marichi, Atri, Angiras, Kratu, Pulaha, Pulastya, Bhrigu, Vasishtha and Daksha, as also Thy much esteemed devotee Bhagavan Narada.

धर्मादिकानभिसृजन्नथ कर्दमं च
वाणीं विधाय विधिरङ्गज-संकुलोऽभूत् ।
त्वद्बोधितैः सनकदक्षमुखै-स्तनूजै-
रुद्बोधितश्च विरराम तमो विमुञ्चन् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Next he created Dharma Deva and Kardama Prajapati. On creating Vani, he was himself overcome by a lustful sentiment towards her, whereupon he was rescued from this dark passion by his own offspring like Sanaka, Daksha and others, who were endowed with the necessary insight to do so by Thee!

वेदान् पुराणनिवहानपि सर्वविद्याः
कुर्वन् निजाननगणा-च्चतुराननोऽसौ ।
पुत्रेषु तेषु विनिधाय स सर्गवृद्धि-
मप्राप्नुवंस्तव पदाम्बुजमाश्रितोऽभूत् ॥ 9 ॥

9. He, the four-faced Brahma, himself gave out and taught the Vedas, the Puranas, and all other branches of knowledge to his progeny mentioned above. But still finding that his creative work was not progressing well, he again resorted to Thee for help.

जानन्नुपायमथ देहमजो विभज्य
स्त्रीपुंसभाव-मभजन्मनुतद्वधूभ्याम् ।
ताभ्यां च मानुषकुलानि विवर्धयंस्त्वं
गोविन्द मारुतपुरेश निरुन्धि रोगान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Knowing from Thee the proper means for the multiplication of created beings, Brahma divided himself into male and female—Manu Swayambhuva and his wife Satarupa. May Thou, O Govinda, who by means of them did multiply the species of man, deign to rid me of my ailments!

CANTO 11

PRELUDE TO THE FIRST INCARNATION

क्रमेण सर्गे परिवर्धमाने
कदापि दिव्याः सनकादयस्ते ।
भवद्विलोकाय विकुण्ठलोकं
प्रपेदिरे मारुतमन्दिरेश ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord of Guruvayoor! As creation progressed and creatures multiplied, the group of four divine sages consisting of Sanaka and the rest went one day to the sphere of Vaikuntha in order to pay their respects to Thee.

मनोज्ञ-नैःश्रेयसकाननाद्यै-
रनेकवापी-मणिमन्दिरैश्च ।
अनोपमं तं भवतो निकेतं
मुनीश्वराः प्रापुरतीतकक्ष्याः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Crossing several enclosures, the sages entered Thy Abode, unmatched by any other sphere because of its entrancing Garden of Spiritual Freedom (Naisreyasa-Kananam) and its numerous lakes and glittering mansions.

भवद्दिदृक्षून् भवनं विविक्षून्
द्वाःस्थौ जयस्तान् विजयोऽप्यरुन्धाम् ।
तेषां च चित्ते पदमाप कोपः
सर्वं भवत्प्रेरणयैव भूमन् ॥ 3 ॥

3. But two gate-keepers, by name Jaya and Vijaya, intercepted these sages who were entering Thy Abode to see Thee. Thereupon anger flashed in the minds of the sages. O Lord! Everything takes place as Thou willest!

वैकुण्ठलोकानुचितप्रचेष्टौ
कष्टौ युवां दैत्यगतिं भजेतम् ।
इति प्रशप्तौ भवदाश्रयौ तौ
हरिस्मृतिर्नोऽस्त्विति नेमतुस्तान् ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'You cruel ones whose conduct is unbecoming of the denizens of Vaikuntha! May you both be embodied as Asuras (demoniac beings).' Cursed thus by the great sages, these servants of Thine prostrated themselves before them, praying that they might not lose their devotion to the Lord (even in their Asura bodies).

तदेतदाज्ञाय भवानवाप्तः
सहैव लक्ष्म्या बहिरम्बुजाक्ष ।
खगेश्वरांसार्पित-चारुबाहु-
रानन्दयंस्ता-नभिराममूर्त्या ॥ 5 ॥

5. Knowing what had happened, Thou, O Lord, didst come to the entrance of Thy Abode, accompanied by Lakshmi and Thy attendant Garuda, Thy hand resting on his shoulders. The sages were delighted by Thy most attractive form.

प्रसाद्य गीर्भिः स्तुवतो मुनीन्द्रा-
ननन्यनाथावथ पार्षदौ तौ ।

संरम्भयोगेन भवैस्त्रिभिर्मा-
मुपेतमित्यात्तकृपं न्यगादीः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Pacifying the sages who began singing Thy praise, Thou didst tell Thy two attendants under curse, who had no protector other than Thyself, to come back to Thee again, after having spent three births as Asuras communing with Thee through confrontation.[9]

त्वदीयभृत्यावथ कश्यपात् तौ
सुरारिवीरावुदितौ दितौ द्वौ ।
सन्ध्या-समुत्पादन-कष्टचेष्टौ
यमौ च लोकस्य यमाविवान्यौ ॥ 7 ॥

7. Thereafter Thy attendants took birth as great Asuras through Diti and her husband Kasyapa. Since the act of procreation took place at the prohibited hour of evening Sandhya (sun-set hour), the twins became cruel destroyers of the worlds, as if they were two new Yamas (gods of death).

हिरण्यपूर्वः कशिपुः किलैकः
परो हिरण्याक्ष इति प्रतीतः ।
उभौ भवन्नाथमशेषलोकं
रुषा न्यरुन्धां निजवासनान्धौ ॥ 8 ॥

8. They became notorious as Hiranyakasipu and Hiranyaksha. Obsessed by their inherent tendencies, they engaged themselves in cruel oppression of the worlds that have Thee as their master.

तयोर्हिरण्याक्ष-महासुरेन्द्रो
रणाय धावन्ननवाप्तवैरी ।
भवत्प्रियां क्ष्मां सलिले निमज्ज्य
चचार गर्वाद्विनदन् गदावान् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Of these two, the great Asura Hiranyaksha ranged the worlds, thirsting for battle. Not finding anywhere an

enemy worthy of his steel, he submerged Thy dear earth in Cosmic Waters and strutted about mace in hand, roaring in overweaning pride.

ततो जलेशात् सदृशं भवन्तं
निशम्य बभ्राम गवेषयंस्त्वाम् ।
भक्तैकदृश्यः स कृपानिधे त्वं
निरुन्धि रोगान् मरुदालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. On learning from God Varuna that Thou wert a match for him, he roamed in search of Thee. O Lord of Guruvayoor, O Thou ocean of mercy whom Bhakti (devotion) alone can reveal! May Thou be pleased to ameliorate my ailments!

CANTO 12

INCARNATION AS COSMIC BOAR

स्वायम्भुवो मनुरथो जनसर्गशीलो
दृष्ट्वा महीमसमये सलिले निमग्नाम् ।
स्त्रष्टारमाप शरणं भवदङ्घ्रिसेवा-
तुष्टाशयं मुनिजनैः सह सत्यलोके ॥ 1 ॥

1. The Manu Swayambhuva, who was engaged in creation, saw the earth being submerged in the Waters, when it was not the time for it. So, accompanied by sages like Marichi, he went to Satyaloka in supplication to Brahma, who resided there with his heart full of joy and peace derived from the practice of devotion to Thee.

कष्टं प्रजाः सृजति मय्यवनिर्निमग्ना
स्थानं सरोजभव कल्पय तत्प्रजानाम् ।
इत्येवमेष कथितो मनुना स्वयम्भू-
रम्भोरुहाक्ष तव पादयुगं व्यचिन्तीत् ॥ 2 ॥

2. 'Alas! The earth has been submerged in Waters while I am engaged in multiplying living beings. O Lotus-born One! Show a new habitation for them.' Hearing these words of Manu, Brahma, O Lord, began to contemplate on Thee (for a solution of the difficulty).

हा हा विभो जलमहं न्यपिबं पुरस्ता-
दद्यापि मज्जति मही किमहं करोमि ।
इत्थं त्वदङ्घ्रियुगलं शरणं यतोऽस्य
नासापुटात् समभवः शिशुकोलरूपी ॥ 3 ॥

3. 'O Great One! I had at the very beginning drunk up the Causal Waters. But nevertheless the earth is sinking. What am I to do now?' From the nasal orifice of Brahma who, speaking thus, took refuge at Thy feet, there emerged Thyself in the form of an infant Boar.

अङ्गुष्ठमात्रवपु-रुत्पतितः पुरस्ताद्
भूयोऽथ कुम्भिसदृशः समजृम्भथास्त्वम् ।
अभ्रे तथाविधमुदीक्ष्य भवन्तमुच्चै-
र्विस्मेरतां विधिरगात् सह सूनुभिः स्वैः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Of the size of a thumb at the time of emergence, Thou didst soon grow to the size of an elephant. Seeing Thee thus growing up to the region of the clouds, Brahma, along with his offspring, looked on Thee with wonder.

कोऽसा-वचिन्त्यमहिमा किटिरुत्थितो मे
नासापुटात् किमु भवेदजितस्य माया ।
इत्थं विचिन्तयति धातरि शैलमात्रः
सद्यो भवन् किल जगर्जिथ घोरघोरम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'Who is this that has come out of my nose as a Boar? Can it be that Being of inconceivable greatness Himself? Can it be another play of the Lord's mysterious power (Maya)?' While Brahma was revolving thus in his mind, Thou didst grow into the size of a mountain and burst into terrific roars again and again.

तं ते निनादमुपकर्ण्य जनस्तपस्थाः
सत्यस्थिताश्च मुनयो नुनुवुर्भवन्तम् ।
तत्स्तोत्रहर्षुलमनाः परिणद्य भूय-
स्तोयाशयं विपुलमूर्ति-रवातरस्त्वम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Hearing Thy roar, the sages occuping the planes of Janaloka, Tapoloka, and Satyaloka began to sing Thy glory. Pleased with their hymns of praise, Thou, with Thy mighty body, didst enter into the Waters.

ऊर्ध्वप्रसारि-परिधूम्र-विधूत-रोमा
प्रोत्क्षिप्त-वालधि-रवाङ्मुख-घोरघोणः ।
तूर्णप्रदीर्णजलदः परिघूर्णदक्ष्णा
स्तोतॄन् मुनीन् शिशिरय-न्नवतेरिथ त्वम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. With Thy erect and bluish hairs twitching, with the tail lifted up, with the fierce snout pointed downwards and with eyes rolling as if to comfort the hymning Rishis, Thou didst plunge into the Waters with a terrific speed that scattered the clouds.

अन्तर्जलं तदनु संकुलनक्रचक्रं
भ्राम्यत्तिमिङ्गिलकुलं कलुषोर्मिमालम् ।
आविश्य भीषणरवेण रसातलस्था-
नाकम्पयन् वसुमती-मगवेषयस्त्वम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. The Waters were filled with agitated alligators, whirling whales and turbulent waves, as Thou didst enter them in search of Thy beloved earth with tremendous roars that shook the denizens of the nether worlds (Rasatala).

दृष्ट्वाऽथ दैत्यहतकेन रसातलान्ते
संवेशितां झटिति कूटकिटिर्विभो त्वम् ।
आपातुका-नविगणय्य सुरारिखेटान्
दंष्ट्राङ्कुरेण वसुधामदधाः सलीलम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! Seeing the earth concealed by the wicked Asura in the region of Rasatala, Thou, the simulated Boar, didst lift her up with Thy tusks, treating with disdain the resistance of Asuras who were but like worms to Thee.

अभ्युद्धरन्नथ धरां दशनाग्रलग्न-
मुस्ताङ्कुराङ्कित इवाधिकपीवरात्मा ।
उद्धूत-घोरसलिलाज्जलधे-रुदञ्चन्
क्रीडावराहवपुरीश्वर पाहि रोगात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord, who didst sportively assume the form of a Boar! Thou who, with Thy gigantic body, didst rise from the forbidding waters of the rough ocean, holding the earth on thy tusk as if it were the root of a tiny grass that Thou hadst dug up—may Thou deign to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 13

DESTRUCTION OF HIRANYAKSHA

हिरण्याक्षं तावद्वरद भवदन्वेषणपरं
चरन्तं सांवर्ते पयसि निजजङ्घापरिमिते ।
भवद्भक्तो गत्वा कपटपटुधीर्नारदमुनिः
शनैरूचे नन्दन् दनुजमपि निन्दंस्तव बलम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Then the sage Narada, who was a devotee of Thine and often engaged himself in diplomatic missions in fulfilment of Thy purposes, approached the Asura Hiranyaksha then wandering about in search of Thee in the Cosmic Waters which hardly reached his knees, and spoke to him in subtle language, extolling the Asura's own strength and denigrating Thine.

स मायावी विष्णुर्हरति भवदीयां वसुमतीं
प्रभो कष्टं कष्टं किमिदमिति तेनाभिगदितः ।

नदन् क्वासौ क्वासाविति स मुनिना दर्शितपथो
भवन्तं सम्प्रापद्धरणिधरमुद्यन्त-मुदकात् ॥ 2 ॥

2. 'Alas! Alas! How is it that the deceitful Vishnu is allowed to get away with the earth, your property, O mighty one!' Thus addressed by Narada, the Asura cried, 'Where is this Vishnu? Where is he?' Following the direction given by the sage, he approached Thee, even as Thou wert rising up from the Waters with the earth.

अहो आरण्योऽयं मृग इति हसन्तं बहुतरै-
र्दुरुक्तैर्विध्यन्तं दितिसुतमवज्ञाय भगवन् ।
महीं दृष्ट्वा दंष्ट्राशिरसि चकितां स्वेन महसा
पयोधावाधाय प्रसभमुदयुङ्क्था मृधविधौ ॥ 3 ॥

3. Disregarding for a moment the Asura who was ridiculing Thee with the words, 'O! This is but a wild animal!' and also hurling abuses at Thee, Thou, who didst see the earth trembling in fear on Thy tusk, didst take her from there and settle her firmly in the ocean, and then get ready for battle.

गदापाणौ दैत्ये त्वमपि हि गृहीतोन्नतगदो
नियुद्धेन क्रीडन् घटघटरवोद्घुष्टवियता ।
रणालोकौत्सुक्या-न्मिलति सुरसंघे द्रुतममुं
निरुन्ध्याः सन्ध्यातः प्रथममिति धात्रा जगदिषे ॥ 4 ॥

4. As the Asura was armed with a mace, Thou too didst flourish a mighty mace and give him battle, which was but a sport to Thee. As the clang of clashing maces reverberated in the sky and as the hosts of Devas gathered eager to see the duel, Brahma cried aloud to Thee, praying that the Asura be killed before nightfall.

गदोन्मर्दे तस्मिंस्तव खलु गदायां दितिभुवो
गदाघाताद् भूमौ झटिति पतितायामहह भोः ।
मृदुस्मेरास्यस्त्वं दनुजकुलनिर्मूलनचणं
महाचक्रं स्मृत्वा करभुवि दधानो रुरुचिषे ॥ 5 ॥

5. Wonderful to relate, in that combat the Asura's stroke suddenly knocked down Thy mace to the ground. Thereupon with a smile on Thy face, Thou didst invoke Thy discus (Sudarsana), famous as the destroyer of the race of Asuras, and Thou didst look magnificent when that discus made its appearance in Thy hand.

ततः शूलं कालप्रतिमरुषि दैत्ये विसृजति
त्वयिच्छिन्दत्येनत् करकलित-चक्रप्रहरणात् ।
समारुष्टो मुष्टया स खलु वितुदंस्त्वां समतनोत्
गलन्माये मायास्त्वयि किल जगन्मोहनकरीः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thereafter the Asura, resembling the god of death in his mood of anger, struck at Thee with a trident (Sula), which was cut to bits by Thee with the discus. The Asura then hit Thee with his fist, and also adopted various tricks of illusory warfare against Thee, in whom illusion has no place.

भवच्चक्रज्योति-ष्कणलव-निपातेन विधुते
ततो मायाचक्रे विततघन-रोषान्धमनसम् ।
गरिष्ठाभि-र्मुष्टिप्रहृतिभि-रभिघ्नन्तमसुरं
स्वपादाङ्गुष्टेन श्रवणपदमूले निरवधीः ॥ 7 ॥

7. The illusions created by the Asura were all dispersed by a modicum of the power of Thy divine discus. Then the Asura, raving with anger, attacked Thee with punches of his heavy fists, whereupon Thou didst deliver a powerful blow with Thy toe at the base of his ear.

महाकायः सोऽयं तव चरणपातप्रमथितो
गलद्रक्तो वक्त्रादपतदृषिभिः श्लाघितहतिः ।
तदा त्वामुद्दाम-प्रमदभर-विद्योतिहृदया
मुनीन्द्राः सान्द्राभिः स्तुतिभि-रनुवन्नध्वरतनुम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Struck powerfully by Thy feet, the monstrous Asura fell down with blood gushing out of his mouth, while all the Rishis sang hymns in praise of Thee for his destruction. With

hearts brimming with joy, they sang in praise of Thee, who art the embodiment of Yajna.

त्वचिछन्दो रोमस्वपि कुशगणश्चक्षुषि घृतं
चतुर्होतारोऽङ्घ्रौ स्रुगपि वदने चोदर इडा ।
ग्रहा जिह्वायां ते परपुरुष कर्णे च चमसा
विभो सोमो वीर्यं वरद गलदेशेऽप्युपसदः ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'O Supreme Being! O Boon-giver! Thy skin stands for Chandas (Vedic metre); Thy hairs, for Kusa grass; Thy eyes, for the ghee pot used in sacrifice; Thy four legs, for the four sacrificing priests; Thy face, for the ladle used in offering; Thy tongue, for the Soma pot; Thy stomach, for the vessel for keeping the ingredients for offering; Thy ears, for the Chamasa vessel for keeping sacrificial remnants; Thy semen, for Soma juice; and Thy neck, for the subsidiary rites called Upasat. (Thou art verily the embodiment of holy Yajna).'

मुनीन्द्रैरित्यादि-स्तवनमुखरै-र्मोदितमना
महीयस्या मूर्त्या विमलतरकीर्त्या च विलसन् ।
स्वधिष्ण्यं सम्प्राप्तः सुखरसविहारी मधुरिपो
निरुन्ध्या रोगं मे सकलमपि वातालयपते ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord manifest in the temple of Guruvayoor! Delighted with the hymns of the sages, Thou, who wert impressive with Thy all-comprehending form and taintless glory, didst retire into Thy Abode of Vaikuntha, revelling in Thy innate Bliss. May Thou be pleased to eradicate my ailments!

CANTO 14

INCARNATION AS KAPILA

समनुस्मृत-तावकाङ्घ्रियुग्मः
स मनुः पङ्कजसम्भवाङ्गजन्मा ।
निजमन्तर-मन्तरायहीनं
चरितं ते कथयन् सुखं निनाय ॥ 1 ॥

1. Manu Swayambhuva, the offspring of Brahma, spent his allotted period (Manvantara) in peace, free from all adversities, and contemplating on Thee and recounting Thy glories.

समये खलु तत्र कर्दमाख्यो
द्रुहिणच्छायभव-स्तदीयवाचा ।
धृतसर्गरसो निसर्गरम्यं
भगवंस्त्वा-मयुतं समाः सिषेवे ॥ 2 ॥

2. During the rule of Swayambhuva, the Prajapati Kardama, who was born of the shadow of Brahma, worshipped Thee, the supremely beautiful, for ten thousand years out of his keen interest in multiplying the species as instructed by Brahma.

गरुडोपरि कालमेघकम्रं
विलसत्केलि-सरोजपाणिपद्मम् ।
हसितोल्लसिताननं विभो त्वं
वपुराविष्कुरुषे स्म कर्दमाय ॥ 3 ॥

3. O All-pervading One! With a complexion attractive like a blue cloud, with the face lit up by a smile, and with a hand twirling a lotus, Thou didst manifest Thyself before Kardama, riding on Thy eagle vehicle, Garuda.

स्तुवते पुलकावृताय तस्मै
मनुपुत्रीं दयितां नवापि पुत्रीः ।

कपिलं च सुतं स्वमेव पश्चात्

स्वगतिं चाप्यनुगृह्य निर्गतोऽभूः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Before departing from the vision of Kardama, who was praising Thee thrilled with devotion, Thou didst bless him that he would have (Devahuti) the daughter of Manu Swayambhuva as his wife, that nine daughters would be born of her to him, that Thou Thyself wouldst also be born to him as his tenth issue under the name Kapila, and that he would finally attain union with Thyself.

स मनुः शतरूपया महिष्या

गुणवत्या सुतया च देवहूत्या ।

भवदीरित-नारदोपदिष्टः

समगात् कर्दम-मागतिप्रतीक्षम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Advised by the Rishi Narada at Thy bidding, Manu Swayambhuva, with his wife Satarupa and virtuous daughter Devahuti, approached Prajapati Kardama who was awaiting their arrival.

मनुनोपहृतां च देवहूतिं

तरुणीरत्नमवाप्य कर्दमोऽसौ ।

भवदर्चन-निर्वृतोऽपि तस्यां

दृढशुश्रूषणया दधौ प्रसादम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Having obtained from the Manu that jewel of a woman Devahuti as his wife, Kardama, though delighting solely in Thy worship, became none the less very loving towards Devahuti because of her devoted service of him.

स पुनस्त्वदुपासनप्रभावा-

द्दयिताकामकृते कृते विमाने ।

वनिताकुलसङ्कुले नवात्मा

व्यहरद् देवपथेषु देवहूत्या ॥ 7 ॥

7. With the powers obtained through Thy worship, Kardama created for the satisfaction of his love-lorn wife, a Vimana (vehicle floating in the air) full of handsome female attendants, and himself assuming a new attractive body, traversed through the heavens to the gardens of the gods where he sported with Devahuti for a long time.

शतवर्षमथ व्यतीत्य सोऽयं
नव कन्याः समवाप्य धन्यरूपाः ।
वनयान-समुद्यतोऽपि कान्ता-
हितकृत् त्वज्जननोत्सुको न्यवात्सीत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Spending a hundred years thus and obtaining nine handsome daughters as offspring, Kardama wanted to retire to the forest to take up the ascetic life, but yielding to the wishes of his wife, continued to stay with her at home, eagerly awaiting Thy birth as their son.

निजभर्तृगिरा भवन्निषेवा-
निरतायामथ देव देवहूत्याम् ।
कपिलस्त्वमजायथा जनानां
प्रथयिष्यन् परमात्मतत्त्वविद्याम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Instructed by her husband, Devahuti engaged herself in devout worship of Thee, and Thou wert gracious enough to be born as her son Kapila in order to teach mankind the means for the attainment of the Supreme Spirit.

वनमेयुषि कर्दमे प्रसन्ने
मतसर्वस्व-मुपादिशन् जनन्यै ।
कपिलात्मक वायुमन्दिरेश
त्वरितं त्वं परिपाहि मां गदौघात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord manifest in Guruvayoor! Thou who wert born as Kapila, and who taught Thy mother the quintessence of philosophy and religion after Thy happy father Kardama had departed to the forests—may Thou deign to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 15

THE MESSAGE OF KAPILA

मतिरिह गुणसक्ता बन्धकृत्तेष्वसक्ता
त्वमृतकृदुपरुन्धे भक्तियोगस्तु सक्तिम् ।
महदनुगमलभ्या भक्तिरेवात्र साध्या
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 1 ॥

1. The mind that is attached to sense objects, the products of the Gunas of Prakriti, is the cause of bondage to the Spirit. If unattached, the same mind becomes the means of attaining Immortality. The practice of devotion to God attenuates attachment to sense objects. Devotion to God, generated by association with holy men, is the one thing to be attained in human life. Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.

प्रकृति-महदहङ्काराश्च मात्राश्च भूता-
न्यपि हृदपि दशाक्षी पूरुषः पञ्चविंशः ।
इति विदितविभागो मुच्यतेऽसौ प्रकृत्या
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Prakriti (Primordial Nature), Mahattattwa (the Great Element), Ahamkara (I-sense), the five Tanmatras (Particles), the five Bhutas (Elements), Antahkarana (Mind and its various modes), the ten Indriyas (Organs, five of knowledge and five of action), and Purusha (Spirit)—these are the twenty-five categories. When the Purusha realizes the distinctiveness of these categories, he is liberated from the bondage of Prakriti (Nature). Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.[10]

प्रकृतिगतगुणौघै-र्नाज्यते पूरुषोऽयं
यदि तु सजति तस्यां तद्गुणास्तं भजेरन् ।
मदनुभजन-तत्त्वालोचनैः साप्यपेयात्
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 3 ॥

3. The Purusha (Spirit), by his association with Prakriti (Nature), is not contaminated to the extent of losing his inherent spiritual quality, for then he would have become matter (Prakriti) and possessed of its attributes. On the other hand it is seen that by devotion to Me and reflection on the nature of Truth, the Purusha is released from the hold of Prakriti. Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.

विमलमतिरुपात्तै-रासनाद्यै-र्मदङ्गं
गरुडसमधिरूढं दिव्यभूषायुधाङ्कम् ।
रुचितुलिततमालं शीलयेतानुवेलं
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Having purified the mind through the control of the senses and having gained proficiency in sitting in the meditative posture, one should constantly meditate on My Divine Form as seated on the back of Garuda, as having bright bluish complexion like that of the Tamala tree, and as bearing divine decorations and weapons. Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.

मम गुणगण-लीलाकर्णनैः कीर्तनाद्यै-
र्मयि सुरसरिदोघ-प्रख्यचित्तानुवृत्तिः ।
भवति परमभक्तिः सा हि मृत्योर्विजेत्री
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 5 ॥

5. By long practice of devotional disciplines like 'hearing' and 'hymning' on My attributes, excellences and sportive activities, the devotee attains to the state of Para-bhakti (supreme devotion) in which the mind always flows naturally, without any external stimulation and in spite of all obstacles, towards Me in a continuous stream as the waters of the Ganga flow towards the ocean. By such devotion one overcomes Samsara (the cycle of births and deaths). Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.

अहह बहुलहिंसा-सञ्चितार्थैः कुटुम्बं
प्रतिदिनमनुपुष्णन् स्त्रीजितो बाललाली ।

विशति हि गृहसक्तो यातनां मय्यभक्तः
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Alas! men spend their life in acquiring wealth by unfair and cruel exploitation for the support of their own families and in subservience to women's charms and love of children. Being devoid of devotion to Me, their worldly attachment and evil ways lead them to hell. Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.

युवतिजठरखिन्नो जातबोधोऽप्यकाण्डे
प्रसवगलितबोधः पीडयोल्लङ्घ्य बाल्यम् ।
पुनरपि बत मुह्यत्येव तारुण्यकाले
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Repeatedly entering the womb of woman for re-birth, the Jiva passes through severe trials. Though he retains the memory of the past in the womb, it is erased during the travails of birth. He then passes through the various impediments of infancy and childhood, and when he enters the stage of youth, he is once again overcome by the infatuations of sense life. Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.

पितृसुरगणयाजी धार्मिको यो गृहस्थः
स च निपतति काले दक्षिणाध्वोपगामी ।
मयि निहितमकामं कर्म तूदक्पथार्थं
कपिलतनुरिति त्वं देवहूत्यै न्यगादीः ॥ 8 ॥

8. A virtuous householder, making sacrificial offerings to Pitris and Devas, goes along the Southern Path of Smoke (to heavenly regions), and after having enjoyed the fruits of his good actions, comes back to human life. Those who do actions without self-centred desires, but merely as offerings unto Me, pass out of life along the Northern Path of Light leading to liberation. Thus didst Thou teach Devahuti in Thy human descent as Kapila.[11]

इति सुविदितवेद्यां देव हे देवहूतिं
कृतनुतिमनुगृह्य त्वं गतो योगिसंघैः ।
विमलमतिरथाऽसौ भक्तियोगेन मुक्ता
त्वमपि जनहितार्थं वर्तसे प्रागुदीच्याम् ।। 9 ।।

9. O Lord! Having thus brought conviction in the truth of Atman to the mind of Devahuti through Thy instruction, and blessing her who sang hymns in praise of Thee, Thou didst move away in the company of a band of ascetics. Devahuti attained liberation through the practice of the discipline of devotion, and Thou continuest to live in the north-east region for the good of mankind.

परम किमु बहूक्त्या त्वत्पदाम्भोजभक्तिं
सकलभयविनेत्रीं सर्वकामोपनेत्रीम् ।
वदसि खलु दृढं त्वं तद्विधूयामयान् मे
गुरुपवनपुरेश त्वय्युपाधत्स्व भक्तिम् ।। 10 ।।

10. O Supreme Being! Where is the need for much talk? Thou hast given the firm declaration that devotion to Thee is the means for the eradication of all fears and the attainment of all objects. So, O Lord of Guruvayoor! Eradicate my ailments and bless me with devotion to Thee.

CANTO 16

NARA-NARAYANA AND DAKSHA-YAGNA

दक्षो विरिञ्चतनयोऽथ मनोस्तनूजां
लब्ध्वा प्रसूतिमिह षोडश चाप कन्याः ।
धर्मे त्रयोदश ददौ पितृषु स्वधां च
स्वाहां हविर्भुजि सतीं गिरिशे त्वदंशे ।। 1 ।।

1. Prajapati Daksha, the son of Brahma, married Prasuti, the daughter of Swayambhuva-manu. He begot of her

sixteen daughters, of whom thirteen he gave to Dharma Deva, and of the others, Swadha to the Pitris, Swaha to Agni, and Sati to Girisa (Siva), who is an aspect (Amsa) of Thyself.

मूर्तिर्हि धर्मगृहिणी सुषुवे भवन्तं
नारायणं नरसखं महितानुभावम् ।
यज्जन्मनि प्रमुदिताः कृततूर्यघोषाः
पुष्पोत्करान् प्रववृषु-र्नुनुवुः सुरौघाः ।। 2 ।।

2. Murti, the wife of Dharma Deva (one of the above-mentioned thirteen), gave birth to Thee as her most glorious son Narayana with Nara (Thy twin-brother) as inseparable companion. At Thy birth the host of Devas rejoiced, sang to the accompaniment of musical instruments, showered flowers, and uttered hymns of praise to Thee.

दैत्यं सहस्रकवचं कवचैः परीतं
साहस्रवत्सरतपः समराभिलव्यैः ।
पर्यायनिर्मिततपःसमरौ भवन्तौ
शिष्टैककङ्कटममुं न्यहतां सलीलम् ।। 3 ।।

3. There was an Asura protected by a thousand coats of mail, for breaking each of which his opponent would have to perform a thousand years of Tapas (austerity) and simultaneously fight with him for the same period. Thou (Narayana) along with Thy inseparable companion Nara, didst, in fulfilment of this requirement, perform Tapas and offer battle in turn simultaneously for the required period until the Asura was left with only one coat in the end and was then slaughtered easily as in play.

अन्वाचरन्नुपदिशन्नपि मोक्षधर्मं
त्वं भ्रातृमान् बदरिकाश्रम-मध्यवात्सीः ।
शक्रोऽथ ते शमतपोबल-निस्सहात्मा
दिव्याङ्गनापरिवृतं प्रजिघाय मारम् ।। 4 ।।

4. Thou didst then dwell in Badarikashrama along with Thy twin brother Nara, observing and teaching the spiritual

disciplines leading to liberation. Sakra, the chief of the gods, being envious of Thy spiritual power and greatness, commissioned Cupid, the god of love, with his paraphernalia of celestial maids, to cause Thy spiritual downfall (by tempting Thee to break Thy observance of the vow of continence).

कामो वसन्त-मलयानिल-बन्धुशाली
कान्ताकटाक्ष-विशिखै-र्विकसद्विलासैः ।
विध्यन्मुहुर्मुहु-रकम्पमुदीक्ष्य च त्वां
भीतस्त्वयाऽथ जगदे मृदुहासभाजा ।। 5 ।।

5. Cupid, with his associates like the spring season (Vasantha) and Malaya breeze, and with his arrows consisting in the love-lorn glances of celestial beauties, attacked Thee again and again, but got frightened on finding Thee impervious to all his attacks. To him (and to the others) so frightened, Thou didst say as follows:

भीत्यालमङ्गज वसन्त सुराङ्गना वो
मन्मानसं त्विह जुषध्वमिति ब्रुवाणः ।
त्वं विस्मयेन परितः स्तुवतामथैषां
प्रादर्शयः स्वपरिचारक-कातराक्षीः ।। 6 ।।

6. 'O Cupid! O Vasanta! O heavenly damsels! Do not be frightened. Now see what I have created as a projection of my mind.' So saying, Thou didst reveal to them, who stood round singing Thy praise in astonishment, Thy handmaids of overpowering beauty in attendance on Thee.

सम्मोहनाय मिलिता मदनादयस्ते
त्वद्दासिकापरिमलैः किल मोहमापुः ।
दत्तां त्वया च जगृहुस्त्रपयैव सर्व-
स्वर्वासिगर्वशमनीं पुनरुर्वशीं ताम् ।। 7 ।।

7. Thereupon Cupid and others who had come to overpower Thee by their charms, themselves got inebriated by

the mere fragrance of Thy handmaids. In a spirit of humiliation, they then accepted into their group Urvasi, whom Thou didst present to them and whose beauty was such as to make all heavenly maids hide themselves in shame.

दृष्ट्वोर्वशीं तव कथां च निशम्य शक्रः
पर्याकुलोऽजनि भवन्महिमावमर्शात् ।
एवं प्रशान्त-रमणीयतरावतारा-
त्वत्तोऽधिको वरद कृष्णतनुस्त्वमेव ॥ 8 ॥

8. Seeing Urvasi and hearing about Thy achievements, Sakra was stunned by the realisation of Thy greatness and was ashamed of his thoughtless act. If there is any Incarnation that could be called greater and more enthralling and attractive than this descent of Thine as Narayana, it is only Thy embodiment as Krishna.[12]

दक्षस्तु धातुरतिलालनया रजोऽन्धो
नात्यादृतस्त्वयि च कष्टमशान्तिरासीत् ।
येन व्यरुन्ध स भवत्तनुमेव शर्वं
यज्ञे च वैरपिशुने स्वसुतां व्यमानीत् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Owing to the extreme indulgence given to him by Brahma, Daksha became blind with haughtiness and the other characteristics of Rajo-guna. Alas! he had no respect for even Thee, and his mind lost the virtue of tranquillity. He therefore evinced antagonism to Siva, who is only another form of Thine, and in a great sacrifice he performed, he gave expression to his hatred of Siva by insulting his own daughter Sati, who had been given in marriage to Siva.

क्रुद्धे शमर्दितमखः स तु कृत्तशीर्षो
देवप्रसादितहरादथ लब्धजीवः ।
त्वत्पूरितक्रतुवरः पुनराप शान्तिं
स त्वं प्रशान्तिकर पाहि मरुत्पुरेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. Siva, enraged by this insult, disrupted the sacrifice of Daksha and also cut off his head, but on being propitiated by the gods, restored him to life again. May Thou, by whose grace Daksha was able to complete the sacrifice and attain to peace—be gracious to protect me!

CANTO 17

THE STORY OF DHRUVA

उत्तानपादनृपते-र्मनुनन्दनस्य
जाया बभूव सुरुचि-र्नितरामभीष्टा ।
अन्या सुनीतिरिति भर्तुरनादृता सा
त्वामेव नित्यमगतिः शरणं गताऽभूत् ॥ 1 ॥

1. King Uttanapada, the son of Manu, had two wives, one named Suruchi who was very dear to him, and the other by name Suniti to whom he was indifferent. Helpless on account of the king's neglect, Suniti took shelter in Thee.

अङ्के पितुः सुरुचिपुत्रकमुत्तमं तं
दृष्ट्वा ध्रुवः किल सुनीतिसुतोऽधिरोक्ष्यन् ।
आचिक्षिपे किल शिशुः सुतरां सुरुच्या
दुःसन्त्यजा खलु भवद्विमुखैरसूया ॥ 2 ॥

2. One day, Suniti's son Dhruva, seeing Uttama, the son of Suruchi, sitting on the lap of the king, their father, was about to ascend his lap himself, whereupon he was abused severely by Suruchi because of jealousy, an evil quality which cannot be got over by people who are not devoted to Thee.

त्वन्मोहिते पितरि पश्यति दारवश्ये
दूरं दुरुक्तिनिहतः स गतो निजाम्बाम् ।
साऽपि स्वकर्मगति-सन्तरणाय पुंसां
त्वत्पादमेव शरणं शिशवे शशंस ॥ 3 ॥

3. On being scolded severely in the presence of his father, the hen-pecked king, who was under the deluding influence of Thy Maya (in the shape of a woman), Dhruva went away to his own mother Suniti who advised him that the one way to overcome the evil effects of one's own past Karma (action) is to seek shelter at Thy feet.

आकर्ण्य सोऽपि भवदर्चन-निश्चितात्मा
मानी निरेत्य नगरात् किल पञ्चवर्षः ।
सन्दृष्टनारद-निवेदित-मन्त्रमार्ग-
स्त्वामारराध तपसा मधुकाननान्ते ॥ 4 ॥

4. Hearing his mother's words, Dhruva, just five years only in age but highly sensitive and self-respecting, left the city, determined to devote himself to Thy worship. He had an opportune meeting with the sage Narada, and being instructed by him in Thy Mantra (sacred Name) and procedures of worship connected with it, he entered the forest of Madhu, where he engaged himself in severe austerities in adoration of Thee.

ताते विषण्णहृदये नगरीं गतेन
श्रीनारदेन परिसान्त्वितचित्तवृत्तौ ।
बालस्त्वदर्पितमनाः क्रमवर्द्धितेन
निन्ये कठोरतपसा किल पञ्चमासान् ॥ 5 ॥

5. The king, who was now filled with remorse, was comforted by sage Narada, who visited the palace. Meanwhile the boy, who had dedicated his whole mind to Thee, engaged himself in austerities of increasing severity for five months.

तावत्तपोबल-निरुछ्वसिते दिगन्ते
देवार्थित-स्त्वमुदयत् करुणार्द्रचेताः ।
त्वद्रूप-चिद्रसनिलीनमतेः पुरस्ता-
दाविर्बभूविथ विभो गरुडाधिरूढः ॥ 6 ॥

6. The radiation of power emanating from his austerity was so great that it obstructed the very life-breath of all beings, whereupon the Devas (on behalf of all) approached Thee for relief (from this oppressive situation). Moved by compassion, Thou wert pleased to manifest Thyself on the back of Garuda before the boy, whose mind had in meditation dissolved in the Consciousness-Bliss that constitutes Thy being.

त्वद्दर्शन-प्रमदभार-तरङ्गितं तं
दृग्भ्यां निमग्नमिव रूपरसायने ते ।
तुष्टूषमाण-मवगम्य कपोलदेशे
संस्पृष्टवानसि दरेण तथाऽऽदरेण ॥ 7 ॥

7. With his heart filled with waves of bliss at Thy sight, and his mind submerged, as it were, in the stream of entrancing beauty revealed to his eyes, Dhruva became desirous of singing Thy praise, whereupon Thou, knowing this, didst affectionately touch his cheek with Thy conch (which is the source of Sabda-Brahma, the seed of all sounds).

तावद्विबोधविमलं प्रणुवन्तमेन-
माभाषथा-स्त्वमवगम्य तदीयभावम् ।
राज्यं चिरं समनुभूय भजस्व भूयः
सर्वोत्तरं ध्रुवपदं विनिवृत्तिहीनम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. He then sang Thy praise, having been purified and enlightened by Thy touch. Knowing what he had in mind, Thou didst bless him to enjoy the kingdom for long and then attain to that loftiest of states from which there is no return to lower states.

इत्यूचिषि त्वयि गते नृपनन्दनोऽसा-
वानन्दिताखिलजनो नगरीमुपेतः ।
रेमे चिरं भवदनुग्रहपूर्णकाम-
स्ताते गते च वनमादृतराज्यभारः ॥ 9 ॥

9. On Thy disappearance (after blessing him), the prince returned to the city to the great joy of its inhabitants. With all his aspiration fulfilled by Thy grace, he ruled over the country efficiently for long, taking upon himself the responsibilities of governance when his father retired to the forest as a hermit.

यक्षेण देव निहते पुनरुत्तमेऽस्मिन्
यक्षैः स युद्धनिरतो विरतो मनूक्त्या ।
शान्त्या प्रसन्नहृदया-द्धनदादुपेता-
त्त्वद्भक्तिमेव सुदृढा-मवृणोन्महात्मा ॥ 10 ॥

10. When his brother Uttama was killed in battle by a Yaksha, Dhruva declared war on the Yakshas, but soon withdrew from it in deference to the advice of the Manu. Pleased with Dhruva's peaceful nature, Vaisravana, the lord of wealth and the leader of the Yakshas, offered him boons, but he chose for his boon only the strengthening of his devotion to Thee.

अन्ते भवत्पुरुषनीत-विमानयातो
मात्रा समं ध्रुवपदे मुदितोऽयमास्ते ।
एवं स्वभृत्यजन-पालनलोलधीस्त्वं
वातालयाधिप निरुन्धि ममामयौघान् ॥ 11 ॥

11. In the end, riding in the Vimana (celestial car) brought by Thy emissaries, he, with his mother, entered the region called Dhruva-loka, and is living there joyfully even now (as the star known as Dhruva). May Thou, who art thus ever keen on offering protection to Thy devotees, be pleased to cure me of my ailments!

CANTO 18

THE STORY OF PRITHU

जातस्य ध्रुवकुल एव तुङ्गकीर्ते-
रङ्गस्य व्यजनि सुतः स वेननामा ।

तद्दोषव्यथितमतिः स राजवर्य-
स्त्वत्पादे निहितमना वनं गतोऽभूत् ॥ 1 ॥

1. In the line of Dhruva, there was a famous king named Anga, who had a son by name Vena. Distressed in mind at the evil nature of his son, the noble king took to the forest to lead the life of a hermit, putting all his faith in Thee alone (for the safe future of his kingdom and people).

पापोऽपि क्षितितलपालनाय वेनः
पौराद्यै-रुपनिहितः कठोरवीर्यः ।
सर्वेभ्यो निजबलमेव संप्रशंसन्
भूचक्रे तव यजनान्ययं न्यरौत्सीत् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Though evil-minded by nature, Vena of irresistible might was installed on the throne by the people for the governance of the country. Ever boasting before others of his own prowess, he prohibited the practice of all forms of Thy worship over his whole kingdom.

संप्राप्ते हितकथनाय तापसौघे
मत्तोऽन्यो भुवनपतिर्न कश्चनेति ।
त्वन्निन्दावचनपरो मुनीश्वरैस्तैः
शापाग्नौ शलभदशा-मनायि वेनः ॥ 3 ॥

3. When the sages approached him once to advise him in regard to right conduct, he indulged in abuse of Thee, saying that there was no ruler of the earth other than himself. The enraged sages thereupon cursed him, and Vena met the fate of a moth in the flame of that curse.

तन्नाशात् खलजनभीरुकै-र्मुनीन्द्रै-
स्तन्मात्रा चिरपरिरक्षिते तदङ्गे ।
त्यक्ताघे परिमथिता-दथोरुदण्डा-
द्दोर्दण्डे परिमथिते त्वमाविरासीः ॥ 4 ॥

4. The absence of a ruler led to the tyranny of the wicked. Frightened by this, the sages approached the body of Vena which was being preserved for long by his mother (Sunita). They churned his thighs and made the body sinless; when next they churned the arms, out camest Thou (as King Prithu).

विख्यातः पृथुरिति तापसोपदिष्टैः
सूताद्यैः परिणुतभाविभूरिवीर्यः ।
वेनार्त्या कबलितसम्पदं धरित्री-
माक्रान्तां निजधनुषा समामकार्षीः ॥ 5 ॥

5. The sages declared the emerging person to be Thy famous Incarnation Prithu, and the minstrels sang in praise of Thy future achievements. The Earth, who had withdrawn all her resources into her interior because of the persecution by Vena, was attacked by Thee with the bow and forced to yield back the hidden resources.

भूयस्तां निजकुलमुख्यवत्सयुक्तै-
र्देवाद्यैः समुचितचारुभाजनेषु ।
अन्नादी-नभिलषितानि यानि तानि
स्वच्छन्दं सुरभितनू-मदूदुहस्त्वम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thou didst then induce the Devas and other species of beings to milk, utilising their leaders as calves, all the food and other requirements in appropriate dainty vessels from the Earth, who had taken the shape of the heavenly cow Surabhi.

आत्मानं यजति मखैस्त्वयि त्रिधाम-
न्नारब्धे शततम-वाजिमेधयागे ।
स्पर्धालुः शतमख एत्य नीचवेषो
हृत्वाऽश्वं तव तनयात् पराजितोऽभूत् ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Thou who wert embodied as Prithu! Whilst Thou (as Prithu) wert adoring Thyself (*i.e.* Lord Vishnu of whom Prithu was an Incarnation) with Yajnas and started the performance of Aswamedha (horse sacrifice) for the

hundredth time, Indra, envious of any one likely to equal him as the performer of one hundred Aswamedhas, came in the form of a barbarian and tried to steal away the horse set apart for Thy sacrifice, but was defeated in his attempt by Thy son Vijitaswa.

देवेन्द्रं मुहुरिति वाजिनं हरन्तं
वह्नौ तं मुनिवरमण्डले जुहूषौ ।
रुन्धाने कमलभवे क्रतोः समाप्तौ
साक्षात्त्वं मधुरिपुमैक्षथाः स्वयं स्वम् ॥ 8 ।

8. Finding that Indra, the lord of the gods, was again and again attempting to steal away the sacrificial horse, the sacrificing sages were about to offer Indra himself in the fire, but were restrained from the course by Brahma. When the sacrifice was completed, Thou, in the form of Prithu, didst find before Thee, Thyself manifested in Thy real form as Vishnu.

तद्दत्तं वरमुपलभ्य भक्तिमेकां
गङ्गान्ते विहितपदः कदापि देव ।
सत्रस्थं मुनिनिवहं हितानि शंस-
न्नैक्षिष्टाः सनकमुखान् मुनीन् पुरस्तात् ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! Thou, as emperor Prithu, didst obtain Bhakti (devotion) as the only desirable boon from Vishnu. Subsequently, Thou wert once engaged in the performance of a Satra, a great Soma sacrifice lasting for one hundred days, in a campus established for the purpose on the banks of the Ganges, when, as Thou wert expounding the path of spiritual welfare to ascetics, Thou didst happen to see before Thee the group of four great sages, Sanaka, Sananda, Sanatana, and Sanatkumara.

विज्ञानं सनकमुखोदितं दधानः
स्वात्मानं स्वयमगमो वनान्तसेवी ।
तत्तादृक् पृथुवपुरीश सत्वरं मे
रोगौघं प्रशमय वातगेहवासिन् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Being instructed by Sanaka in the knowledge of Brahman, Thou didst betake Thyself to the life of the forest-dwelling hermit and realise Thine own nature as Brahman. O Lord of Guruvayoor who didst thus embody Thyself as Prithu! Be pleased to cure me of my ailments!

CANTO 19

THE STORY OF THE PRACHETAS

पृथोस्तु नप्ता पृथुधर्मकर्मठः प्राचीनबर्हि-र्युवतौ शतद्रुतौ ।
प्राचेतसो नाम सुचेतसः सुता-नजीजनत् त्वत्करुणाङ्कुरानिव ॥ 1 ॥

1. Prithu's great grandson Pracheenabarhis, reputed for his enthusiastic undertakings for the good of the world, had the young lady Satadruta for his wife. Like sprouts of Thy grace, he had, of her, ten noble-minded sons known by the group name of Prachetas.

पितुः सिसृक्षानिरतस्य शासनात् भवत्तपस्याभिरता दशापि ते ।
पयोनिधिं पश्चिममेत्य तत्तटे सरोवरं सन्ददृशु-र्मनोहरम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Commanded by their father to multiply the species, these ten brothers, being firm believers in the importance of Thy worship, resorted to the shores of the western sea for the practice of austerities and came upon a charming lake there.

तदा भवत्तीर्थमिदं समागतो भवो भवत्सेवक-दर्शनादृतः ।
प्रकाशमासाद्य पुरः प्रचेतसा-मुपादिशत् भक्ततमस्तव स्तवम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. It was a holy lake frequented by Siva, who was himself one of the greatest of Thy devotees. Eager to see Thy devotees, Siva manifested himself before the Prachetas brothers and imparted to them a great hymn on Thee.

स्तवं जपन्तस्तममी जलान्तरे भवन्त-मासेविषितायुतं समाः ।
भवत्सुखास्वाद-रसादमीष्वियान् बभूव कालो ध्रुववन्न शीघ्रता ॥ 4 ॥

4. These devotees, chanting the hymn, spent ten thousand years in water in worship and meditation on Thee. For the attainment of the bliss of Thy realisation, they had to spend this long period in austerity unlike Dhruva who got it very quickly.

तपोभिरेषा-मतिमात्र-वर्धितैः स यज्ञहिंसा-निरतोऽपि पावितः ।
पिताऽपि तेषां गृहयातनारद- प्रदर्शितात्मा भवदात्मतां ययौ ॥ 5 ॥

5. The intensity of their austerity purified even their sinful ancester Vena who was noted for his hostility to Yajnas and other devotional acts. And their father Prachinabarhis, instructed by Narada who visited him, obtained the knowledge of the Atman and attained to Thee.

कृपाबलेनैव ततः प्रचेतसां प्रकाशमागाः पतगेन्द्रवाहनः ।
विराजि-चक्रादि-वरायुधांशुभि-र्भुजाभिरष्टाभि-रुदञ्चितद्युतिः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Afterwards, out of Thy abounding grace, Thou didst reveal Thyself to the Prachetas, seated on Thy Vehicle Garuda and glorious with eight arms holding divine weapons like the discus.

प्रचेतसां तावदयाचतामपि त्वमेव कारुण्यभराद्वरानदाः ।
भवद्विचिन्ताऽपि शिवाय देहिनां भवत्वसौ रुद्रनुतिश्च कामदा ॥ 7 ॥

7. Though unsought, Thou didst offer boons to them out of Thy grace and didst declare, 'May the very thought of you bring good to the world! May the hymn imparted to you by Rudra bestow all their desires to men who repeat it !

अवाप्य कान्तां तनयां महीरुहां तया रमध्वं दशलक्षवत्सरीम् ।
सुतोऽस्तु दक्षो ननु तत्क्षणाच्च मां प्रयास्यथेति न्यगदो मुदैव तान् ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Having obtained Kamalalochana, the daughter of the trees, as wife, you will lead a happy life with her for ten lakhs of years. You will also have a son named Daksha. Soon after, you will attain to Me.' Thus didst Thou bless the Prachetas, being highly pleased with them.

ततश्च ते भूतलरोधिन-स्तरून् क्रुधा दहन्तो द्रुहिणेन वारिताः ।
द्रुमैश्च दत्तां तनयामवाप्य तां त्वदुक्तकालं सुखिनोऽभिरेमिरे ॥ 9 ॥

9. After this, the Prachetas, angered by the dense growth of trees causing obstruction to people on the land, began to burn them out but were restrained by Brahma. The trees gave them their daughter Kamalalochana in marriage, and they lived happily with her for the time specified by Thee.

अवाप्य दक्षं च सुतं कृताध्वराः प्रचेतसो नारदलब्धया धिया ।
अवापुरानंदपदं तथाविध-स्त्वमीश वातालयनाथ पाहि माम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. After having begotten the son Daksha and performed several sacrificial rites, and having received instruction on the Atman from Narada, the Prachetas attained liberation. O Lord of Guruvayoor who art thus merciful towards Thy devotees! Grant protection to me.

CANTO 20

THE STORY OF RISHABHA DEVA

प्रियव्रतस्य प्रियपुत्रभूता-दाग्नीध्रराजादुदितो हि नाभिः ।
त्वां दृष्टवानिष्टद-मिष्टिमध्ये तवैव तुष्ट्यै कृतयज्ञकर्मा ॥ 1 ॥

1. King Priyavrata had a dear son named Agneedhra, of whom was born Nabhi. While performing a Yajna for propitiating Thee, he had a vision of Thee, the bestower of desired boons to devotees.

अभिष्टुतस्तत्र मुनीश्वरैस्त्वं राज्ञा स्वतुल्यं सुतमर्थ्यमानः ।
स्वयं जनिष्येऽहमिति ब्रुवाण-स्तिरोऽदधा बर्हिषि विश्वमूर्ते ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Lord with the Cosmos as Thy form! Being praised by the sages and prayed to by the king for a son equal to Thyself, Thou didst declare that Thou wouldst Thyself be born as his son, and then didst disappear within the sacrificial fire.

नाभिप्रियायामथ मेरुदेव्यां त्वमंशतोऽभूर्ऋषभाभिधानः ।
अलोकसामान्य-गुणप्रभाव-प्रभाविताशेष-जनप्रमोदः ॥ ३ ॥

3. Afterwards Thou didst embody Thyself as the son of Nabhi in his wife Meru Devi as a partial Incarnation with the name Rishabha, delighting all the worlds with the sublimity of Thy innumerable virtues so rare to find anywhere else.

त्वयि त्रिलोकीभृति राज्यभारं निधाय नाभिः सह मेरुदेव्या ।
तपोवनं प्राप्य भवन्निषेवी गतः किलानन्दपदं पदं ते ॥ 4 ॥

4. Having transferred the responsibilities of state to Thee, the master of the three worlds, Nabhi, with his wife Meru Devi, went to dwell in the forest as an ascetic, and worshipping Thee, attained to Thy state of supreme Bliss.

इन्द्र-स्त्वदुत्कर्षकृता-दमर्षा-द्ववर्ष नास्मिन्नजनाभवर्षे ।
यदा तदा त्वं निजयोगशक्त्या स्ववर्षमेनत् व्यदधाः सुवर्षम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Owing to jealousy at the prosperity of the world generated by Thy (Rishabha's) greatness, Indra withheld rain from the continent known as Ajanabha-varsha. Thereupon Thou by Thy Yogic power didst bring abundant rainfall on this continent, which was under Thy sway.

जितेन्द्रदत्तां कमनीं जयन्ती-मथोद्वहन्नात्मरताशयोऽपि ।
अजीजनस्तत्र शतं तनूजान् येषां क्षितीशो भरतोऽग्रजन्मा ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thus defeated, Indra bestowed beautiful Jayanti on Thee as wife. Though Thou wert ever absorbed in the Atman, Thou didst beget in her one hundred sons, of whom king Bharata was the eldest.

नवाभवन् योगिवरा नवान्ये त्वपालयन् भारतवर्षखण्डान् ।
सैका त्वशीतिस्तव शेषपुत्रा-स्तपोबलात् भूसुरभूयमीयुः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Of the others, nine became famous ascetics (Yogis), and another nine ruled over the nine regions of the land of Bharata. The remaining eighty one sons became Brahmanas by the power of their austerity.

उक्त्वा सुतेभ्योऽथ मुनीन्द्रमध्ये विरक्ति-भक्त्यन्वित-मुक्तिमार्गम् ।
स्वयं गतः पारमहंस्यवृत्ति-मधा जडो-न्मत्त-पिशाच-चर्याम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Afterwards, Thou didst instruct Thy sons, along with great ascetics, in the path of salvation through renunciation and devotion. Then adopting the way of life of Paramahamsas, Thou didst go about appearing variously as an idiot, a lunatic or a ghost.

परात्मभूतोऽपि परोपदेशं कुर्वन् भवान् सर्वनिरस्यमानः ।
विकारहीनो विचचार कृत्स्नां महीमहीनात्मरसाभिलीनः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Though one with the Supreme Atman, Thou, in the state of complete absorption in Thy own bliss, didst wander all over the earth, instructing others and showing complete indifference when rejected or insulted by all.

शयुव्रतं गोमृगकाकचर्यां चिरं चरन्नाप्य परं स्वरूपम् ।
दवाहृताङ्गः कुटकाचले त्वं तापान् ममापाकुरु वातनाथ ॥ 10 ॥

10. Observing the ways of life of a python, a cow, a deer and a crow, Thou didst wander about for long until Thy body perished in a forest fire in the Kutaka (Coorg) mountain. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Deign to offer me protection!

CANTO 21

WORSHIP IN DIFFERENT CONTINENTS

मध्योद्भवे भुव इलावृतनाम्नि वर्षे
गौरीप्रधान-वनिताजन-मात्रभाजि ।
शर्वेण मन्त्रनुतिभिः समुपास्यमानं
संकर्षणात्मक-मधीश्वर संश्रये त्वाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. In the middle of the earth is the region called Ilavrita inhabited exclusively by women with Gowri as their chief.

I seek refuge in Thee, O Lord, who art present there as Sankarshana and worshipped with holy chants by Sharva (Siva) in his 'man-woman' form known as Ardhanareesvara.

भद्राश्वनामक इलावृतपूर्ववर्षे
भद्रश्रवोभिर्ऋषिभिः परिणूयमानम् ।
कल्पान्तगूढ-निगमोद्धरण-प्रवीणं
ध्यायामि देव हयशीर्षतनुं भवन्तम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. I meditate on Thee as Hayagriva (the Horse-necked), far famed as the restorer of the Vedas lost in the deluge at the end of the cosmic cycle, whom great numbers of Rishis of auspicious fame worship with hymns of praise in the region known as Bhadrasva, situated to the east of Ilavrita.

ध्यायामि दक्षिणगते हरिवर्षवर्षे
प्रह्लादमुख्यपुरुषैः परिषेव्यमाणम् ।
उत्तुङ्गशान्त-धवलाकृति-मेकशुद्ध-
ज्ञानप्रदं नरहरिं भगवन् भवन्तम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Lord! I meditate on Thee manifest in the region Harivarsha, to the south of Ilavrita, as Nrisimha with a mighty body, calm in demeanour and white in colour, who is the bestower of the highest spiritual illumination and who is ever attended upon by Prahlada and other devotees.

वर्षे प्रतीचि ललितात्मनि केतुमाले
लीलाविशेष-ललितस्मित-शोभनाङ्गम् ।
लक्ष्म्या प्रजापतिसुतैश्च निषेव्यमाणं
तस्याः प्रियाय धृतकामतनुं भजे त्वाम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. I worship Thee embodied, for the satisfaction of Thy Consort Lakshmi, as Kama Deva (Cupid) with a charming smile and brilliant appearance, and residing in the beautiful region of Ketumala to the west of Ilavrita, where Thou art worshipped by Lakshmi herself and the sons of Prajapati.

रम्येऽप्युदीचि खलु रम्यकनाम्नि वर्षे
तद्वर्षनाथ-मनुवर्य-सपर्यमाणम् ।
भक्तैकवत्सल-ममत्सरहृत्सु भान्तं
मत्स्याकृतिं भुवननाथ भजे भवन्तम् ।। 5 ।।

5. I worship Thee, the Lord of all, of the form of the Fish, who is very gracious to devotees, who shines in the hearts of all pure-hearted people, and who resides in the enchanting region called Ramyaka to the north of Ilavrita, worshipped by Vaivasvata-manu, the lord of that region.

वर्षं हिरण्मयसमाह्वय-मौत्तराह-
मासीन-मद्रिधृति-कर्मठ-कामठाङ्गम् ।
संसेवते पितृगणप्रवरोऽर्यमा यं
तं त्वां भजामि भगवन् परचिन्मयात्मन् ।। 6 ।।

6. O Supreme Light of Pure Consciousness! I worship Thee, with the form of the huge Tortoise that could bear the Mandara mountain on its back, who resides in the region called Hiranmaya to the north of Ramyaka, worshipped by Aryama, the famous chief of the Pitris (Manes).

किंचोत्तरेषु कुरुषु प्रियया धरण्या
संसेवितो महितमन्त्र-नुतिप्रभेदैः ।
दंष्ट्राग्रघृष्ट-घनपृष्ठगरिष्ठवर्ष्मा
त्वं पाहि विज्ञनुत-यज्ञवराहमूर्ते ।। 7 ।।

7. I worship Thee of the form of Yajna-Varaha (the Divine Boar as embodiment of sacrifice), who is adored by the wise, whose gigantic body rises so high that the tusks rub against the clouds, and who resides in the Uttara-kuru region worshipped by Thy Consort, the Earth, with the utterance of holy Mantras and hymns of praise.

याम्यां दिशं भजति किंपुरुषाख्यवर्षे
संसेवितो हनुमता दृढभक्तिभाजा ।

सीताभिराम-परमाद्भुत-रूपशाली
रामात्मकः परिलसन् परिपाहि विष्णो ॥ 8 ॥

8. Give protection to me, O Vishnu, Thou who dost occupy Kimpurusha-varsha to the south of Ilavrita in the unique form of Rama, charming due to Sita's presence by the side, and worshipped by Hanuman with firm and unwavering devotion!

श्रीनारदेन सह भारतखण्डमुख्यै-
स्त्वं सांख्ययोगनुतिभिः समुपास्यमानः ।
आकल्पकालमिह साधुजनाभिरक्षी
नारायणो नरसखः परिपाहि भूमन् ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! I seek protection in Thee who hast manifested as Narayana, the companion of Nara, and who, praised by Narada and the leading men of Bharata region with hymns embodying the truths of Samkhya and Yoga, residest in the region of Bharatavarsha till the end of the world for the enlightenment of mankind.

प्लाक्षेऽर्करूपमयि शाल्मल इन्दुरूपं
द्वीपे भजन्ति कुशनामनि वह्निरूपम् ।
क्रौञ्चेऽम्बुरूपमथ वायुमयं च शाके
त्वां ब्रह्मरूपमयि पुष्करनाम्नि लोकाः ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord! Thou art worshipped by devotees as the sun in the Plaksha, as the moon in the Salmala, as fire in the Kusa, as water in the Krauncha, as air in the Saka, and as Brahman in the Pushkara continents.

सर्वैर्ध्रुवादिभि-रुडुप्रकरै-र्ग्रहैश्च
पुच्छादिकेष्ववयवे-ष्वभिकल्प्यमानैः ।
त्वं शिशुमारवपुषा महतामुपास्यः
सन्ध्यासु रुन्धि नरकं मम सिन्धुशायिन् ॥ 11 ॥

11. O Resident of the Milk Ocean! Thou who art to be meditated upon at the three Sandhyas (dawn, noon and

eve) as the great Fish Sisumara, in whose body are plotted all the planets and stars like Dhruva (the Polar Star) as constituting different limbs like the tail and the rest—mayest Thou be pleased to efface my sufferings!

पातालमूलभुवि शेषतनुं भवन्तं
लोलैककुण्डलविराजि-सहस्रशीर्षम् ।
नीलाम्बरं धृतहलं भुजगाङ्गनाभि-
र्जुष्टं भजे हर गदान् गुरुगेहनाथ ॥ 12 ॥

12. I adore Thee as Adisesha, the great serpent, residing at the bottom of Patala (nether worlds), having a thousand hoods but only a single tremulous ear ornament, wearing a blue garment, armed with a plough, and worshipped by serpent women. May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to relieve me of my ailments!

CANTO 22

THE STORY OF AJAMILA

अजामिलो नाम महीसुरः पुरा
चरन् विभो धर्मपथान् गृहाश्रमी ।
गुरोर्गिरा काननमेत्य दृष्टवान्
सुधृष्टशीलां कुलटां मदाकुलाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Once a Brahmana householder named Ajamila, a faithful adherent of religious duties, went to the forest (for collecting sacrificial fuel) at the bidding of his father, and there met an immodest and immoral woman given to drinking and debauchery.

स्वतः प्रशान्तोऽपि तदाहृताशयः
स्वधर्ममुत्सृज्य तया समारमन् ।
अधर्मकारी दशमी भवन् पुन-
र्दधौ भवन्नामयुते सुते रतिम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Though by nature a man of self-control, he came under the influence of that woman, and revelling in her company, gave up all his religious duties and led a sinful life. As he advanced in years, he became intensely attached to his son known by Thy Name, Narayana.

स मृत्युकाले यमराजकिङ्करान्
भयङ्करांस्त्री-नभिलक्षयन् भिया ।
पुरा मनाक् त्वत्स्मृतिवासनाबला-
ज्जुहाव नारायणनामकं सुतम् ।। ३ ।।

3. At the time of death, when three fierce-looking emissaries of Yama appeared before him, he called out in fright the name of his son Narayana, induced by a faint memory of his short-lived devotional life of the past.

दुराशयस्यापि तदा त्वनिर्गत-
त्वदीय-नामाक्षरमात्र-वैभवात् ।
पुरोऽभिपेतु-र्भवदीयपार्षदा-
श्चतुर्भुजाः पीतपटा मनोरमाः ।। 4 ।।

4. Thereupon, owing to the greatness of Thy divine Name that he uttered, there appeared before him, in spite of his evil nature, Thy emissaries of lovely appearance having four arms and wearing yellow garments.

अमुं च संपाश्य विकर्षतो भटान्
विमुञ्चते-त्यारुरुधु-र्बलादमी ।
निवारितास्ते च भवज्जनैस्तदा
तदीयपापं निखिलं न्यवेदयन् ।। 5 ।।

5. Seeing him tied with a noose and pulled by Yama's emissaries, Thy servants ordered his release and by force set him free. Being thus obstructed by Thy men, the emissaries of Yama narrated to them all the sins of Ajamila.

भवन्तु पापानि कथं तु निष्कृते
कृतेऽपि भो दण्डनमस्ति पण्डिताः ।
न निष्कृतिः किं विदिता भवादृशा-
मिति प्रभो त्वत्पुरुषा बभाषिरे ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'O you who pretend to be learned! Even if one has committed sins, how can punishment be inflicted when atonement has been done for them? Is it unknown even to you what constitutes real atonement?' Thus, O Lord, did Thy servants speak.

श्रुतिस्मृतिभ्यां विहिता व्रतादयः
पुनन्ति पापं न लुनन्ति वासनाम् ।
अनन्तसेवा तु निकृन्तति द्वयी-
मिति प्रभो त्वत्पुरुषा बभाषिरे ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'The vows and observances laid down in Srutis and Smritis absolve a person from sins, but they do not eradicate the sinful tendency. But the service of the Infinite Lord puts an end to both.' Thus, O Lord, did Thy servants speak.

अनेन भो जन्मसहस्रकोटिभिः
कृतेषु पापेष्वपि निष्कृतिः कृता ।
यदग्रहीन्नाम भयाकुलो हरे-
रिति प्रभो त्वत्पुरुषा बभाषिरे ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Even if he has been committing sins for a thousand crores of years, he has done atonement for them when, overcome by fear, he uttered the Name of Hari.' Thus, O Lord, did Thy servants speak.

नृणामबुद्ध्यापि मुकुन्दकीर्तनं
दहत्यघौघान् महिमास्य तादृशः ।
यथाग्निरेधांसि यथौषधं गदा-
निति प्रभो त्वत्पुरुषा बभाषिरे ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'The utterance of the Divine Name, even in ignorance, burns up sins. Such is its power. It is just like fire burning up fuel and medicine curing a disease (irrespective of one's knowledge or ignorance concerning their properties).'[13] Thus, O Lord, did Thy servants speak.

इतीरितै-र्याम्यभटै-रपासृते
भवद्भटानां च गणे तिरोहिते ।
भवत्स्मृतिं कंचनकालमाचरन्
भवत्पदं प्रापि भवद्भटैरसौ ॥ 10 ॥

10. Being so advised, the emissaries of Yama departed as also Thine. Ajamila, however, continued to live for some time in remembrance and worship of Thee, and was afterwards led to Thy Abode by Thy emissaries.

स्वकिङ्करावेदन-शङ्कितो यम-
स्त्वदंघ्रिभक्तेषु न गम्यतामिति
स्वकीयभृत्या-नशिशिक्षदुच्चकैः
स देव वातालयनाथ पाहि माम् ॥ 11 ॥

11. Much concerned at the report of his emissaries, Yama ordered them in a loud voice not to approach Thy devotees. O Lord of Guruvayoor of such glory! May Thou be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 23

THE STORY OF CHITRAKETU

प्राचेतसस्तु भगवन्नपरो हि दक्ष-
स्त्वत्सेवनं व्यधित सर्गविवृद्धिकामः ।
आविर्बभूविथ तदा लसदष्टबाहु-
स्तस्मै वरं ददिथ तां च वधूमसिक्नीम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Daksha, different from the one mentioned earlier, was the son of Prachetas. Desirous of multiplying the species, he worshipped Thee, who didst appear before him in a form with eight arms and give him the desired boons as also Asikni for wife.

तस्यात्मजा-स्त्वयुतमीश पुनः सहस्रं
श्रीनारदस्य वचसा तव मार्गमापुः ।
नैकत्रवासमृषये स मुमोच शापं
भक्तोत्तमस्त्वृषि-रनुग्रहमेव मेने ॥ 2 ॥

2. He had eleven thousand sons, all of whom chose the path of devotion to Thee as instructed by Sri Narada, (instead of becoming householders as desired by Daksha). Daksha (angry at this) pronounced a curse on Narada, that he would lead a wandering life without any fixed habitation, but the great sage, a prince among devotees, accepted the curse as a blessing.

षष्ट्या ततो दुहितृभिः सृजतः कुलौघान्
दौहित्रसूनुरथ तस्य स विश्वरूपः ।
त्वत्स्तोत्रवर्मित-मजापय-दिन्द्रमाजौ
देव त्वदीयमहिमा खलु सर्वजैत्रः ॥ 3 ॥

3. Daksha then proceeded to multiply the species through his sixty daughters. One of the daughters had a son named Twashta, and his son was Viswarupa. Providing Indra with a protective armour generated by a hymn addressed to Thee (Narayana-kavacha), Viswarupa enabled him to win victory over the Asuras. Thy power can certainly overcome everything else.

प्राक् शूरसेनविषये किल चित्रकेतुः
पुत्राग्रही नृपतिरङ्गिरसः प्रभावात् ।
लब्ध्वैकपुत्रमथ तत्र हते सपत्नी-
संघैरमुह्यदवशस्तव माययाऽसौ ॥ 4 ॥

4. Once upon a time Chitraketu, the king of the Surasenas, being desirous of a son, got one by the blessing of sage Angiras. The child was, however, murdered by the other wives of the king, who thereupon swooned with grief owing to the power of Thy Maya.

तं नारदस्तु सममङ्गिरसा दयालुः
सम्प्राप्य तावदुपदर्श्य सुतस्य जीवम् ।
कस्यास्मि पुत्र इति तस्य गिरा विमोहं
त्यक्त्वा त्वदर्चनविधौ नृपतिं न्ययुङ्क्त ॥ 5 ॥

5. The merciful Narada, along with the sage Angiras (by whose blessing this son was born), went to the bereaved king and showed him the soul of the dead son. The soul asked, 'Whose son am I (inasmuch as I had countless parents in my countless previous births)?' These words dispelled the ignorant attachment of the king, and he was thereupon instructed by the sage in the ways of Thy worship.

स्तोत्रं च मन्त्रमपि नारदतोऽथ लब्ध्वा
तोषाय शेषवपुषो ननु ते तपस्यन् ।
विद्याधराधिपतितां स हि सप्तरात्रे
लब्ध्वा-प्यकुण्ठमति-रन्वभजद्-भवन्तम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Afterwards, Chitraketu, receiving initiation from Narada in the Mantra and hymn relating to Thy aspect as Adisesha, practised austerities and meditation on Thee, and within seven days, obtained the headship of the Vidyadharas (celestial artistes), but not being satisfied with it, continued his worship of Thee.

तस्मै मृणालधवलेन सहस्रशीर्ष्णा
रूपेण बद्धनुति-सिद्धगणावृतेन ।
प्रादुर्भवन्नचिरतो नुतिभिः प्रसन्नो
दत्वात्मतत्त्व-मनुगृह्य तिरोदधाथ ॥ 7 ॥

7. Presently, Thou didst reveal Thyself to him in Thy form as Adisesha, thousand-hooded and white like a lotus

stalk, with bands of Siddhas standing round and singing Thy praise. Pleased with his worship, Thou didst impart to him the knowledge of the Self before Thou didst disappear, pronouncing blessings on him.

त्वद्भक्तमौलिरथ सोऽपि च लक्षलक्षं
वर्षाणि हर्षुलमना भुवनेषु कामम् ।
संगापयन् गुणगणं तव सुन्दरीभिः
सङ्गातिरेकरहितो ललितं चचार ॥ 8 ॥

8. Afterwards, this great devotee (Chitraketu), steeped in Divine Bliss, wandered about for several lakhs of years without much of sensuous attachment, leading a troupe of handsome Vidyadharis (celestial songstresses) singing Thy glories and excellences.

अत्यन्तसङ्गविलयाय भवत्प्रणुन्नो
नूनं स रौप्यगिरिमाप्य महत्समाजे ।
निश्शङ्क-मङ्ककृत-वल्लभ-मङ्गजारिं
तं शंकरं परिहसन्नुमयाऽभिशेपे ॥ 9 ॥

9. In order to rid him completely of all sensuous hankerings, Thou didst prompt him once to go to Mount Kailasa. There seeing, in the assembly of wise men, Siva, the destroyer of Kama Deva (the god of love), sitting with his wife Uma on his lap in a mood of absolute unconcern, Chitraketu mocked at him, and was in turn cursed by Uma.

निस्सम्भ्रमस्त्वय-मयाचित-शापमोक्षो
वृत्रासुरत्व-मुपगम्य सुरेन्द्रयोधी ।
भक्त्यात्मतत्त्वकथनैः समरे विचित्रं
शत्रोरपि भ्रममपास्य गतः पदं ते ॥ 10 ॥

10. Not dismayed in the least by the curse (because of the potency of Self-knowledge), Chitraketu did not ask for any atonement for gaining release from the effect of the curse. He got embodiment as Vritrasura and engaged himself in hostilities with Indra. Strange to say, while engaged in

battle, he helped his enemy to overcome ignorance by imparting instruction to him in the cultivation of Divine love and knowledge, and finally attained to Thy state (being killed by Indra with his thunderbolt).

त्वत्सेवनेन दितिरिन्द्रवधोद्यतापि
तान्प्रत्युतेन्द्रसुहृदो मरुतोभिलेभे ।
दुष्टाशयेऽपि शुभदैव भवन्निषेवा
तत्तादृशस्त्वमव मां पवनालयेश ।। 11 ।।

11. Diti, the mother of the Asuras, worshipped Thee in order to have offspring who could destroy Indra, but instead, gave birth to the Maruts who became friends of Indra. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou whose worship can confer good even on persons of evil intentions, may Thou be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 24

THE STORY OF PRAHLADA

हिरण्याक्षे पोत्रिप्रवरवपुषा देव भवता
हते शोकक्रोध-ग्लपितधृति-रेतस्य सहजः ।
हिरण्यप्रारम्भः कशिपु-रमराराति-सदसि
प्रतिज्ञामातेने तव किल वधार्थं मधुरिपो ।। 1 ।।

1. O Lord! O Destroyer of Madhu! When Hiranyaksha was killed by Thee in Thy Incarnation as the Lordly Boar, his brother, Hiranyakasipu, smitten with sorrow and anger, swore in the assembly of Asuras that he would destroy Thee.

विधातारं घोरं स खलु तपसित्वा नचिरतः
पुरः साक्षात्कुर्वन् सुरनरमृगाद्यै-रनिधनम् ।
वरं लब्ध्वा दृप्तो जगदिह भवन्नायकमिदं
परिक्षुन्द-न्निन्द्रादहरत दिवं त्वामगणयन् ।। 2 ।।

2. Through the practice of intense austerity (Tapas), he soon compelled Brahma to appear before him and give him the boon that he could not be killed by any god, man or beast. With his arrogance augmented by the boon, and his mind bent on destroying this world having Thee for its Lord, he usurped the heavenly regions from Indra, disregarding Thee.

निहन्तुं त्वां भूयस्तव पदमवाप्तस्य च रिपो-
र्बहिर्दृष्टेरन्तर्दधिथ हृदये सूक्ष्मवपुषा ।
नदन्नुच्चै-स्तत्राप्यखिलभुवनान्ते च मृगयन्
भिया यातं मत्वा स खलु जितकाशी निववृते ॥ 3 ॥

3. In order to destroy Thee, he came up to Thy Abode in Vaikuntha, but Thou didst disappear from his gross vision by withdrawing into his heart in a subtle form. Roaring aloud, he searched for Thee in all the worlds, but not finding Thee anywhere, he concluded that Thou hadst fled away from fear. Claiming victory, he returned home.

ततोऽस्य प्रह्लादः समजनि सुतो गर्भवसतौ
मुनेर्वीणापाणे-रधिगत-भवद्भक्तिमहिमा ।
स वै जात्या दैत्यः शिशुरपि समेत्य त्वयि रतिं
गतस्त्वद्भक्तानां वरद परमोदाहरणताम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. To him was born a son named Prahlada, who, even when he was in the mother's womb, imbibed the spirit of God-love from the instructions of sage Narada. O Bestower of boons! Though by birth an Asura and in age a mere child, this Prahlada evinced intense love for Thee and became the most conspicuous example of one endowed with loving devotion to Thee.

सुरारीणां हास्यं तव चरणदास्यं निजसुते
स दृष्ट्वा दुष्टात्मा गुरुभि-रशिशिक्ष-च्चिरममुम् ।
गुरुप्रोक्तं चासा-विदमिद-मभद्राय दृढमि-
त्यपाकुर्वन् सर्वं तव चरणभक्त्यैव ववृधे ॥ 5 ॥

5. Seeing in his son signs of devotion to Thee, which was a subject of ridicule among Asuras, the evil-minded Hiranyakasipu had Prahlada brain-washed for long under competent instructors. But the boy rejected all their teachings one after another as unwholesome, and grew up with his devotional zeal unabated.

अधीतेषु श्रेष्ठं किमिति परिपृष्ठेऽथ तनये
भवद्भक्तिं वर्यामभिगदति पर्याकुलधृतिः ।
गुरुभ्यो रोषित्वा सहजमतिरस्ये-त्यभिविदन्
वधोपायानस्मिन् व्यतनुत भवत्पादशरणे ॥ 6 ॥

6. Once, on being asked what constituted the most important lesson he had learnt thus far, the boy replied that it consisted in the practice of devotion to Thee. Agitated at this, Hiranyakasipu was all wrath at the teachers, but being told by them that this was the natural bent of his mind (which they could not change), he devised measures for the destruction of this great devotee of Thine.

स शूलैराविद्धः सुबहु मथितो दिग्गजगणै-
र्महासर्पैर्दष्टो-प्यनशनगराहारविधुतः ।
गिरीन्द्रावक्षिप्तोऽप्यहह परमात्मन्नयि विभो
त्वयि न्यस्तात्मत्वात् किमपि न निपीडामभजत ॥ 7 ॥

7. O All-pervading Spirit! Though pierced with a trident, trampled again and again by elephants, bitten by great serpents, starved, poisoned, and thrown down from mountain peaks—no pain was felt by the boy Prahlada, who had his mind fixed on Thee.

ततः शङ्काविष्टः स पुनरतिदुष्टोऽस्य जनको
गुरूक्त्या तद्गेहे किल वरुणपाशैस्तमरुणत् ।
गुरोश्चासान्निध्ये स पुनरनुगान् दैत्यतनयान्
भवद्भक्तेस्तत्त्वं परममपि विज्ञानमशिषत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Frightened at this, cruel-hearted Hiranyakasipu, on the advice of the teachers, had the boy tied up with Varunapasa at the teacher's house. But whenever the teacher was absent, Prahlada began to teach the doctrine of love for, and knowledge of, Thee to the Asura boys.

पिता श्रृण्वन् बालप्रकरमखिलं त्वत्स्तुतिपरं
रुषान्धः प्राहैनं कुलहृतक कस्ते बलमिति ।
बलं मे वैकुण्ठस्तव च जगतां चापि स बलं
स एव त्रैलोक्यं सकलमिति धीरोऽयमगदीत् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Hearing that all the boys were constantly singing Thy praise, Hiranyakasipua shouted at Prahlad in a fit of blind fury, 'O wretch of a traitor! Who is your support (that you should thus challenge my might)?' Prahlada, with the courage born of Knowledge, answered that Maha-Vishnu was his support, that He was the support of all the worlds, including Hiranyakasipu himself, and that all the three worlds were, indeed, His manifestation!

अरे क्वासौ क्वासौ सकलजगदात्मा हरिरिति
प्रभिन्ते स्म स्तंभं चलितकरवालो दितिसुतः ।
अतः पश्चाद्विष्णो न वदितुमीशोऽस्मि सहसा
कृपात्मन् विश्वात्मन् पवनपुरवासिन् मृडय माम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'O wretch! Where is he? Where is that Hari whom you call the soul of the worlds?' Thus challenging his son, he struck at a pillar in front with a mighty sweep of his sword. What followed, O Vishnu, is beyond my power of description! O All-merciful and All-pervading one, O Soul of the Worlds and the Lord of Guruvayoor! Deign to make me whole!

CANTO 25

THE INCARNATION AS MAN-LION

स्तंभे घट्टयतो हिरण्यकशिपोः कर्णौ समाचूर्णय-

न्नाघूर्णज्जग-दण्डकुण्डकुहरो घोरस्तवाभू-द्रवः ।

श्रुत्वा यं किल दैत्यराजहृदये पूर्वं कदाप्यश्रुतं

कम्पः कश्चन संपपात चलितो-प्यम्भोजभू-र्विष्टरात् ॥ 1 ॥

1. As Hiranyakasipu struck at the pillar, he heard a terrific sound, Thy roar, splitting his ears and whirling the whole world from within by its impact. Hearing that hitherto unheard of sound, the Asura king felt an awesome and indescribable shiver within, while even Brahma was startled on his throne (in Satyaloka).

दैत्ये दिक्षु विसृष्टचक्षुषि महासंरम्भिणि स्तम्भतः

सम्भूतं न मृगात्मकं न मनुजाकारं वपुस्ते विभो ।

किं किं भीषण-मेतदद्भुतमिति व्युद्भ्रान्तचित्तेऽसुरे

विस्फूर्ज-द्धवलोग्ररोम-विकसद्वर्ष्मा समाजृम्भथाः ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Lord! As the Asura stared around in great excitement, there burst forth from that pillar a form of Thine that was neither of a man nor of a beast. Even as he was revolving in his agitated and awe-struck mind as to what this terrific and wondrous being might be, Thou didst grow into a huge form with white, brilliant and forbidding mane (of a lion).

तप्तस्वर्ण-सवर्णघूर्ण-दतिरूक्षाक्षं सटाकेसर-

प्रोत्कम्प-प्रनिकुम्बितांबर-महो जीयात्तवेदं वपुः ।

व्यात्तव्याप्त-महादरीसखमुखं खड्गोग्रवल्गन्महा-

जिह्वानिर्गम-दृश्यमानसुमहा-दंष्ट्रायुगोड्डामरम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Hail unto Thy Man-Lion form with rolling eyes that looked fierce and shining like molten gold; with flying mane and matted locks overcasting the skies (or in the alternative: 'covering his body'); with wide open mouth resembling

an enormous cave; and with a fierce quivering tongue looking like a sword, which, while lolling out, revealed the two terrific molars on either side.

उत्सर्प-द्वलिभङ्ग-भीषणहनुं ह्रस्वस्थवीयस्तर-
ग्रीवं पीवरदोश्शतोद्गत-नखक्रूरांशु-दूरोल्बणम् ।
व्योमोल्लङ्घि घनाघनोपमघन-प्रध्वाननिर्धावित-
स्पर्धालुप्रकरं नमामि भवतस्तन्नारसिंहं वपुः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Salutation to Thy Man-Lion form with cheek rendered forbidding on account of face-lines that wrinkled up while roaring; with a short but stout neck; with a hundred powerful arms having projecting claws, ferocious and lustrous; and with a roaring voice whose terrific bursts, reverberating from the skies like thunder claps, put the hosts of enemies into fright and flight.

नूनं विष्णुरयं निहन्म्यमुमिति भ्राम्यद्गदाभीषणं
दैत्येन्द्रं समुपाद्रवन्तमधृथा दोर्भ्यां पृथुभ्याममुम्
वीरो निर्गलितोऽथ खड्गफलके गृह्णन्विचित्रश्रमान्
व्यावृण्वन् पुनरापपात भुवनग्रासोद्यतं त्वामहो ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'He must indeed be Vishnu! I shall kill him now,' resolving thus and whirling a formidable mace, the king of Asuras rushed at Thee, but was arrested by being held by Thee with Thy stout arms. Releasing himself from Thy clutches, the Asura took a sword, and displaying marvellous feats of swordsmanship, again rushed at Thee, who wert in a mood to swallow all the worlds.

भ्राम्यन्तं दितिजाधमं पुनरपि प्रोद्गृह्य दोर्भ्यां जवाद्-
द्वारेऽथोरुयुगे निपात्य नखरान् व्युत्खाय वक्षोभुवि ।
निर्भिन्द-न्नधिगर्भ-निर्भरगलद्रक्ताम्बु बद्धोत्सवं
पायं पायमुदैरयो बहु जगत्संहारि-सिंहारवान् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Again grasping quickly by hand the wicked Asura who was approaching Thee with a circling movement, Thou

didst throw him flat on Thy lap at the doorway and tear open his chest with thy nails after deeply embedding them within. And then with lion-roars powerful enough to shatter the worlds, Thou didst again and again drink with glee the blood that gushed from the Asura's body.

त्यक्त्वा तं हतमाशु रक्तलहरी-सिक्तोन्नम-द्वर्ष्मणि
प्रत्युत्पत्य समस्तदैत्यपटलीं चाखाद्यमाने त्वयि ।
भ्राम्यद्भूमि विकम्पिताम्बुधिकुलं व्यालोलशैलोत्करं
प्रोत्सर्पत्खचरं चराचरमहो दुःस्थामवस्थां दधौ ॥ 7 ॥

7. Abandoning the dead Asura, Thou with Thy body bathed in blood and grown into gigantic proportions, didst spring up, and begin to eat up all the Asuras round about, whereupon all the worlds seemed to whirl, the oceans got turbulent, the mountains trembled, the celestial luminaries got scattered with the blows of Thy matted mane, and chaos seemed to overtake everything.

तावन्मांसवपा-करालवपुषं घोरान्त्रमालाधरं
त्वां मध्येसभ-मिद्धरोष-मुषितं दुर्वारगुर्वारवम् ।
अभ्येतुं न शशाक कोपि भुवने दूरे स्थिता भीरवः
सर्वे शर्व-विरिञ्च-वासवमुखाः प्रत्येकमस्तोषत ॥ 8 ॥

8. None dared to approach Thee, as Thou didst sit in the assemblage and roar again and again in great wrath, Thy body forbiddingly terrific with fat and flesh smeared all over and with loops of intestines dangling round Thy neck. Overawed, all stood away, including Siva, Brahma and Indra, and sang Thy praise, each by himself from a distance.

भूयोऽप्यक्षतरोषधाम्नि भवति ब्रह्माज्ञया बालके
प्रह्लादे पदयोर्नमत्यपभये कारुण्यभाराकुलः ।
शान्तस्त्वं करमस्य मूर्ध्नि समधाः स्तोत्रैरथोद्गायत-
स्तस्याकामधियोपि तेनिथ वरं लोकाय चानुग्रहम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Seeing Thy rage still unabated, Brahma directed Prahlada, who alone remained fearless, to prostrate at Thy

feet. Thereupon, Thou, being overcome by love and compassion, didst calm down and place Thy hands by way of blessing on the head of the boy, who burst into a hymn of praise and received from Thee, unasked, a boon that was for the good of the world.

एवं नातितरौद्रचेष्टित विभो श्रीतापनीयाभिध-
श्रुत्यन्तस्फुट-गीतसर्वमहिम-न्नत्यन्तशुद्धाकृते ।
तत्तादृङ्-निखिलोत्तरं पुनरहो कस्त्वां परो लङ्घयेत्
प्रह्लादप्रिय हे मरुत्पुरपते सर्वामयात्पाहि माम् ।। 10 ।।

10. Thus didst Thou act a drama of ferocity, though Thou art of the nature of absolute purity possessing all the transcendent greatness described in the Nrisimhatapani Upanishad. O Lord of Guruvayoor, O Beloved of Prahlada! Thou who art the greatest of all beings, who art unequalled by any others, and who canst not therefore be overcome by any one else—may Thou be pleased to cure me of all my ailments!

CANTO 26

THE LIBERATION OF THE ELEPHANT-KING

इन्द्रद्युम्नः पाण्ड्यखण्डाधिराज-
स्त्वद्भक्तात्मा चन्दनाद्रौ कदाचित् ।
त्वत्सेवायां मग्नधीरालुलोके
नैवागस्त्यं प्राप्तमातिथ्यकामम् ।। 1 ।।

1. Thy great devotee Indradyumna, the king of the Pandya land, was once engaged in Thy worship at the Malaya mountain. While so engaged, the sage Agasthya approached him expecting the hospitality due to a guest, but the king did not even look at him, as his mind was fully absorbed in Thy worship.

कुम्भोद्भूतिः संभृतक्रोधभारः
स्तब्धात्मा त्वं हस्तिभूयं भजेति।
शप्त्वाथैनं प्रत्यगात्सोऽपि लेभे
हस्तीन्द्रत्वं त्वत्स्मृतिव्यक्तिधन्यम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Overcome with anger, the sage Agasthya departed, cursing the king that as a consequence of his proud and haughty nature, he would be born as an elephant. The king accordingly got the body of a lordly elephant, blessed with a clear memory of Thee.

दुग्धाम्भोधे-र्मध्यभाजि त्रिकूटे
क्रीडन् शैले यूथपोयं वशाभिः।
सर्वान् जन्तूनत्यवर्तिष्ट शक्त्या
त्वद्भक्तानां कुत्र नोत्कर्षलाभः ॥ 3 ॥

3. In the midst of the milky ocean there was a great mountain called Trikuta, on which he (Indradyumna turned elephant) sported with female elephants, excelling all other creatures in physical strength. Greatness, indeed, is the inheritance of Thy devotees wherever they might find themselves!

स्वेन स्थेम्ना दिव्यदेशत्वशक्त्या
सोयं खेदानप्रजानन् कदाचित्।
शैलप्रान्ते घर्मतान्तः सरस्यां
यूथैः सार्धं त्वत्प्रणुन्नोऽभिरेमे ॥ 4 ॥

4. Owing to his own strength and the spiritual excellence of the region he inhabited, the elephant-king had no occasion to feel any of the difficulties of life. One day, tired by wandering on the slopes of the hills in the hot sun, he sought relief in a particular lake and sported therein with his herd, as if prompted by Thee, the Indweller of all beings.

हूहूस्तावद्देवलस्यापि शापात्
ग्राहीभूतस्तज्जले वर्तमानः।

जग्राहैनं हस्तिनं पाददेशे
शान्त्यर्थं हि श्रान्तिदोऽसि स्वकानाम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. There dwelt in that very lake a Gandharva named Huhu, transformed by the curse of sage Devala into a crocodile, who now caught the elephant-king by the leg. Indeed! it is only for the ultimate spiritual welfare of Thy devotees that Thou inflictest sufferings on them in the beginning.

त्वत्सेवाया वैभवाद् दुर्निरोधं
युद्ध्यन्तं तं वत्सराणां सहस्रम् ।
प्राप्ते काले त्वत्पदैकाग्र्यसिद्ध्यै
नक्राक्रान्तं हस्तिवर्यं व्यधास्त्वम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Endowed with the power and glory derived from Thy worship, the elephant-king had proved irresistible in his thousand years of conflicts with other creatures, but when the time for his redemption had come and he was fit to develop one-pointed devotion to Thy feet, Thou didst subject him to the attack of the crocodile.

आर्तिव्यक्त-प्राक्तनज्ञानभक्तिः
शुण्डोत्क्षिप्तैः पुण्डरीकैः समर्चन् ।
पूर्वाभ्यस्तं निर्विशेषात्मनिष्ठं
स्तोत्रश्रेष्ठं सोऽन्वगादीत्परात्मन् ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Supreme Being! With his inherent devotion and knowledge unfolded now through the stress of suffering, he began to offer Thee worship with white lotus flowers plucked with his trunk, and also to give utterance to a great hymn relating to the attributeless Atman, which had been the object of his communion in the past.

श्रुत्वा स्तोत्रं निर्गुणस्थं समस्तं
ब्रह्मेशाद्यै-र्नाहमित्यप्रयाते ।
सर्वात्मा त्वं भूरिकारुण्यवेगा-
त्तार्क्ष्यारूढः प्रेक्षितोऽभूः पुरस्तात् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Hearing that hymn relating to the attributeless Universal Being (or the Supreme Being beyond the touch of the Gunas of Prakriti), gods like Brahma and Siva did not respond, as they could not feel it was addressed to them. But moved by abounding mercy, Thou, who art the soul of all beings (and therefore the one universal and all-inclusive Existence), didst appear before him on the back of Garuda, Thy vehicle.

हस्तीन्द्रं तं हस्तपद्मेन धृत्वा
चक्रेण त्वं नक्रवर्यं व्यदारीः।
गन्धर्वेऽस्मिन् मुक्तशापे स हस्ती
त्वत्सारूप्यं प्राप्य देदीप्यते स्म ॥ 9 ॥

9. Pulling out the elephant-king with Thy lotus hands, Thou didst cut asunder that powerful crocodile with a stroke of Thy discus. Thereupon, both of them being released from curse, the Gandharva (Huhu) got back his old form, while the elephant-king attained to the glorious Sarupya form of salvation consisting in being endowed with a form exactly like Thine.

एतद् वृत्तं त्वां च मां च प्रगेयो
गायेत्सोऽयं भूयसे श्रेयसे स्यात्।
इत्युक्त्वैनं तेन सार्धं गतस्त्वं
धिष्ण्यं विष्णो पाहि वातालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'He who praises Me and you at dawn with the recital of these incidents, will attain to liberation'—O Vishnu! O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who didst say like this and depait to Thy abode of Vaikuntha along with the liberated king! May Thou be pleased to offer protection to me!

CANTO 27

CHURNING THE OCEAN FOR NECTAR

दुर्वासाः सुरवनिताप्त-दिव्यमाल्यं
शक्राय स्वयमुपदाय तत्र भूयः ।
नागेन्द्रप्रतिमृदिते शशाप शक्रं
का क्षान्ति-स्त्वदितर-देवतांशजानाम् ।। 1 ।।

1. The sage Durvasas once presented Indra, the king of the gods, with a celestial garland received from heavenly nymphs. But seeing that the garland was immediately allowed to be trampled upon by Indra's elephant, the sage cursed Indra. Where is forbearance to be found except in those blessed by Thee!

शापेन प्रथितजरेऽथ निर्जरेन्द्रे
देवेष्वप्यसुरजितेषु निष्प्रभेषु ।
शर्वाद्याः कमलजमेत्य सर्वदेवा
निर्वाणप्रभव समं भवन्तमापुः ।। 2 ।।

2. The curse transformed Indra, who is known as Nirjara (the unaging one), into an aged being, and he and his followers, the Devas, being deprived of all prowess, got defeated by the Asuras. The gods along with Siva and others, therefore, approached Brahma, and all of them together took refuge in Thee, O Bestower of Salvation!

ब्रह्माद्यैः स्तुतमहिमा चिरं तदानीं
प्रादुष्षन् वरद पुरः परेण धाम्ना ।
हे देवा दितिजकुलै-र्विधाय सन्धि
पीयूषं परिमथतेति पर्यशास्त्वम् ।। 3 ।।

3. O Grantor of Boons! Being praised for long with hymns expressive of Thy excellences, Thou didst manifest Thyself before them in great glory, and command: 'O Devas! Make peace with the Asuras and take steps to churn out Ambrosia (from the milk ocean).'

सन्धानं कृतवति दानवैः सुरौघे
मन्थानं नयति मदेन मन्दराद्रिम् ।
भ्रष्टेऽस्मिन् बदरमिवोद्वहन् खगेन्द्रे
सद्यस्त्वं विनिहितवान् पयःपयोधौ ॥ 4 ॥

4. Thereupon the Devas contracted friendship with the Asuras. Then with great pride in their hearts, they were bringing the Mandara mountain for use as a churning rod. The mountain fell from their hands (on the way). Thereupon Thou, seated on Thy vehicle Garuda, didst pick it up, as if it were a tiny berry, and install it in the milk ocean (as a churning rod).

आधाय द्रुतमथ वासुकिं वरत्रां
पाथोधौ विनिहित-सर्वबीजजाले ।
प्रारब्धे मथनविधौ सुरासुरैस्तै-
र्व्याजात्त्वं भुजगमुखेऽकरोः सुरारीन् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Using the serpent Vasuki as the churning string, the Devas and the Asuras soon started churning the milk ocean after putting every kind of medicinal herb into it. At the start of the churning, Thou didst entice the Asuras into holding the serpent Vasuki, the churning string, by his head.

क्षुब्धाद्रौ क्षुभितजलोदरे तदानीं
दुग्धाब्धौ गुरुतरभारतो निमग्ने ।
देवेषु व्यथिततमेषु तत्प्रियैषी
प्राणैषीः कमठतनुं कठोरपृष्ठाम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. The Mandara mountain used as the churning rod stirred the milk ocean to its depths, but owing to its weight, began to sink down into the depth of the ocean. Thereupon Thou didst assume the form of a tortoise with a hard back in order to favour the sorrow-stricken Devas.

वज्रातिस्थिरतरकर्परेण विष्णो
विस्तारात् परिगतलक्षयोजनेन ।

अम्भोधेः कुहरगतेन वर्ष्मणा त्वं
निर्मग्नं क्षितिधरनाथमुन्निनेथ ॥ 7 ॥

7. O All-pervading Being! Submerging Thyself in the ocean, Thou didst lift up and support the sinking mountain on Thy back, which was harder than thunderbolt and more than a lakh of Yojanas in width.

उन्मग्ने झटिति तदा धराधरेन्द्रे
निर्मेथुर्दृढमिह सम्मदेन सर्वे ।
आविश्य द्वितयगणेऽपि सर्पराजे
वैवश्यं परिशमयन्नवीवृधस्तान् ॥ 8 ॥

8. When the mountain was thus lifted up by Thee, all churned the ocean in concert with great force and enthusiasm, while Thou didst enter into the serpent Vasuki as well as the churning hosts of Devas and Asuras to assuage their fatigue and stimulate them.

उद्दामभ्रमण-जवोन्नमद्-गिरीन्द्र-
न्यस्तैकस्थिरतर-हस्तपङ्कजं त्वाम् ।
अभ्रान्ते विधिगिरिशादयः प्रमोदा-
दुद्भ्रान्ता नुनुवु-रुपात्तपुष्पवर्षाः ॥ 9 ॥

9. As the mountain (used as churning rod) was being whirled about powerfully, it rose up to the surface, and Thou didst keep it steady and in position by placing on it Thy lotus-like hand (weighty enough to keep down even a huge mountain). Seeing this, Siva, Brahma and other gods, thrilled with surprise and joy, praised Thee from their positions in the heavens to the accompaniment of a profuse shower of flowers.

दैत्यौघे भुजगमुखानिलेन तप्ते
तेनैव त्रिदशकुलेऽपि किञ्चिदार्ते ।
कारुण्यात्तव किल देव वारिवाहाः
प्रावर्षन्नमरगणान् न दैत्यसङ्घान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. When the poisonous breath coming from the serpent distressed the Asuras very much (because they were on the side of its head), and also the Devas to some extent, clouds were made to rain by Thy mercy, but the rain fell only on the Devas, cooling them, but not on the Asuras.

उद्भ्राम्यद्बहुतिमि-नक्र-चक्रवाले
तत्राब्धौ चिरमथितेऽपि निर्विकारे ।
एकस्त्वं करयुगकृष्टसर्पराजः
संराजन् पवनपुरेश पाहि रोगात् ॥ 11 ॥

11. Long did they churn the ocean with no results beyond the ejection of numerous aquatic creatures from the ocean bed to the surface. O Lord of Guruvayoor, Thou who, (in order to relieve the tired churners), didst then take over the churning by Thyself holding both the ends of the serpent-king in Thy two hands—may Thou be pleased to relieve me of my ailments!

CANTO 28

THE GIFTS OF THE OCEAN

गरलं तरलानलं पुरस्ता-ज्जलधेरुद्विजगाल कालकूटम् ।
अमरस्तुतिवाद-मोदनिघ्नो गिरिशस्तन्निपपौ भवत्प्रियार्थम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. The first thing to emerge from the ocean was the blazing poison called Kalakuta. For pleasing Thee (and for the protection of the worlds) Siva drank that poison, being propitiated by hymns and praises uttered by the gods.

विमथत्सु सुरासुरेषु जाता सुरभिस्तामृषिषु न्यधास्त्रिधामन् ।
हयरत्नमभूदथेभरत्नं द्युतरुश्चाप्सरसः सुरेषु तानि ॥ 2 ॥

2. As the gods and the Asuras continued to churn the ocean, the divine cow Surabhi (known also as Kamadhenu), came out. Thou, O Supreme Being, didst bestow her on the

Rishis. Next a unique horse and a rare type of elephant, as also the heavenly tree named Kalpataru and the celestial nymphs known as Apsaras, came out, and these were awarded to the Devas.

जगदीश भवत्परा तदानीं कमनीया कमला बभूव देवी ।
अमला-मवलोक्य यां विलोल: सकलोऽपि स्पृहयाम्बभूव लोक: ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Lord of the Worlds! Afterwards emerged the attractive lotus-born goddess Lakshmi, who is ever devoted to Thee. Seeing her immaculate form, every one there got fascinated by her.

त्वयि दत्तहृदे तदैव देव्यै त्रिदशेन्द्रो मणिपीठिकां व्यतारीत् ।
सकलोपहृता-भिषेचनीयै-र्ऋषयस्तां श्रुतिगीर्भि-रभ्यषिञ्चन् ॥ 4 ॥

4. To that goddess whose heart was set on Thee, Indra, the king of the gods, gave a be-jewelled throne, and the Rishis consecrated her, chanting Vedic hymns and showering on her consecrated waters and other sacred ingredients gathered by all from far and near.

अभिषेकजला-नुपातिमुग्ध-त्वदपाङ्गै-रवभूषिताङ्गवल्लीम् ।
मणिकुण्डल-पीतचेलहार-प्रमुखैस्ता-ममरादयोऽन्वभूषन् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Following the holy water thus poured on her, Thy charming side glances settled on her creeper-like form as a decoration, while the gods added further embellishments like diamond-studded ear rings, necklaces, robe of yellow silk and the like.

वरणस्रज-मात्तभृङ्गनादां दधती सा कुचकुम्भमन्दयाना ।
पदशिञ्जित-मञ्जुनूपुरा त्वां कलितव्रील-विलास-माससाद ॥ 6 ॥

6. She moved towards Thee with a wedding garland harbouring humming bees, her gait rendered slow by the weight of her heavy bosom, her shapely anklets spreading a delightful murmuring sound, and her beauty enhanced by a touch of coyness that played on her face.

गिरिश-द्रुहिणादि-सर्वदेवान् गुणभाजोऽप्यविमुक्त-दोषलेशान् ।
अवमृश्य सदैव सर्वरम्ये निहिता त्वय्यनयापि दिव्यमाला ॥ 7 ॥

7. Realizing, after due reflection, that all the gods, including Siva and Brahma, were not without some shortcoming in spite of their greatness, she put the wedding garland on Thee, who alone art ever and in every way perfect.

उरसा तरसा ममानिथैनां भुवनानां जननीमनन्यभावाम् ।
त्वदुरोविलस-त्तदीक्षणश्री-परिवृष्टया परिपुष्टमास विश्वम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Lakshmi, the Mother of this universe, whose mind was ever set on none but Thee, was thereupon honoured by Thee by Thy chest being awarded to her as abode, wherefrom she could shower the rain of her glances on the worlds bringing all-round prosperity to them.

अतिमोहनविभ्रमा तदानीं मदयन्ती खलु वारुणी निरागात् ।
तमसः पदवीमदा-स्त्वमेना-मतिसम्माननया महासुरेभ्यः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Next gushed forth liquor, highly deluding, inebriating and exciting in its effect. This, the source of all sin and vice, Thou didst give with great show of honour to the mighty Asuras.

तरुणाम्बुदसुन्दर-स्तदा त्वं ननु धन्वन्तरि-रुत्थितोऽम्बुराशेः ।
अमृतं कलशे वहन् कराभ्या-मखिलार्तिं हर मारुतालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. Thou, who next didst arise from the ocean, incarnating as Dhanvantari, beautiful in complexion like a fresh rain cloud and bearing in hand the jug of Ambrosia—may Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to remove all my ailments!

CANTO 29

THE INCARNATION AS MOHINI

उद्गच्छतस्तव करादमृतं हरत्सु दैत्येषु तानशरणाननुनीय देवान् ।
सद्यस्तिरोदधिथ देव भवत्प्रभावा-दुद्यत्सयूथ्यकलहा दितिजा बभूवुः ॥

1. On Thy (Dhanvantari's) emerging from the ocean with the pot of Ambrosia, the Asuras took it away from Thy hand, leaving the Devas helpless. Comforting them, Thou didst immediately disappear from their midst. Meanwhile, O Lord, by the prompting of Thy Maya, there arose in the ranks of the Asuras an internecine quarrel (over the distribution of the Ambrosia).

श्यामां रुचाऽपि वयसाऽपि तनुं तदानीं
प्राप्तोऽसि तुङ्गकुचमण्डलभंगुरां त्वम् ।
पीयूषकुम्भकलहं परिमुच्य सर्वे
तृष्णाकुलाः प्रतिययु-स्त्वदुरोजकुम्भे ॥ 2 ॥

2. Just then Thou didst appear among them, assuming the form of an exquisitely handsome woman, bluish in complexion and youthful in years, whose frame seemed to bend under the weight of her high and heavy bosom. Thereupon the Asuras stopped their quarrel over the pot of Ambrosia and approached Thee, being infatuated by the sight of the pot-like breasts of Thine.

का त्वं मृगाक्षि विभजस्व सुधामिमामि-
त्यारूढरागविवशा-नभियाचतोऽमूनू ।
विश्वस्यते मयि कथं कुलटाऽस्मि दैत्या
इत्यालपन्नपि सुविश्वसितानतानीः ॥ 3 ॥

3. 'Who are you, beautiful lady with doe-like eyes? Would you kindly distribute this Ambrosia among us?' entreated the Asuras, their hearts infatuated with passion for her. 'How do you trust me—a harlot?' Thus didst Thou quiz, but at the same time generated trust in their mind (through Thy looks and poses).

मोदात् सुधाकलशमेषु ददत्सु सा त्वं
दुश्चेष्टितं मम सहध्वमिति ब्रुवाणा ।
पङ्क्तिप्रभेद-विनिवेशित-देवदैत्या
लीलाविलासगतिभिः समदाः सुधां ताम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. On the Asuras joyfully handing over the jar of Ambrosia to Thee, Thou, in the form of Mohini (charming temptress) didst tell them that they would have to bear even with Thy improprieties (if the distribution was to be undertaken). Then seating the Devas and Asuras in separate rows, Thou didst serve the whole of that Ambrosia among the Devas while Thou didst hold the Asuras infauated and spellbound by Thy fascinating gait and movements.

अस्मास्वियं प्रणयिनीत्यसुरेषु तेषु जोषं स्थितेष्वथ समाप्य सुधां सुरेषु ।
त्वं भक्तलोकवशगो निजरूपमेत्य स्वर्भानुमर्धपरिपीतसुधं व्यलावीः ॥

5. As the Asuras sat silent under the delusion that the Mohini was full of love for them, Thou, who art ever favourably disposed to Thy devotees, didst finish the distribution of the whole of that Ambrosia among the Devas and assume Thy real form, when Thou didst cut off the head of the Asura Rahu who (crossing into the ranks of the Devas stealthily) had half-swallowed his quota of Ambrosia.

त्वत्तः सुधाहरणयोग्यफलं परेषु
दत्वा गते त्वयि सुरैः खलु ते व्यगृह्णन् ।
घोरेऽथ मूर्च्छति रणे बलिदैत्यमाया-
व्यामोहिते सुरगणे त्वमिहाविरासीः ॥ 6 ॥

6. After Thou hadst departed, having meted out to the Asuras the consequences of snatching away the Ambrosia from Thy hands, the Asuras again started fighting with the Devas. When in the thick of the fierce battle, the Devas were reduced to a state of swoon by the magical arts of the Asura Bali, Thou didst again appear in their midst.

त्वं कालनेमिमथ मालिमुखान् जघन्थ
शक्रो जघान बलिजम्भवलान् सपाकान् ।
शुष्कार्द्रदुष्करवधे नमुचौ च लूने
फेनेन नारदगिरा न्यरुणो रणं तम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Then Thou didst destroy the Asuras Kalanemi, Mali and others, while Bali, Jambha and Vala along with Paka were killed by Indra. Namuchi who could not be killed by anything that is solid or liquid was destroyed by a weapon made of foam. The battle was then stopped on the advice of sage Narada.

योषावपु-र्दनुजमोहनमाहितं ते
श्रुत्वा विलोकनकुतूहलवान् महेशः ।
भूतैः समं गिरिजया च गतः पदं ते
स्तुत्वाब्रवी-दभिमतं त्वमथो तिरोधाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. Hearing about Thy assuming a female form to delude the Asuras, Siva became eager to see that form, and therefore resorted to Thy Abode accompanied by his consort Uma and his attendant goblins. Being beseeched by him with hymns and prayer, Thou didst disappear from his presence (granting his request).

आरामसीमनि च कन्दुकघातलीला-
लोलायमान-नयनां कमनीं मनोज्ञाम् ।
त्वामेष वीक्ष्य विगलद्वसनां मनोभू-
वेगादनङ्गरिपुरङ्ग समालिलिङ्ग ॥ 9 ॥

9. Then Siva saw Thee in the corner of a garden as a woman of bewitching beauty engaged in a game of ball, moving about with undulating gaze, with robes often slipping down in the course of her movements. Over-powered by the sight, Siva embraced Thee, in spite of his being known as the conqueror of Cupid.

भूयोऽपि विद्रुतवती-मुपधाव्य देवो वीर्यप्रमोक्षविकसत् परमार्थबोधः ।
त्वन्मानितस्तव महत्वमुवाच देव्यै तत्तादृशस्त्वमव वातनिकेतनाथ ॥

10. Again while pursuing the Mohini (who had slipped away from his embrace), sanity dawned on him. Thou who didst then offer him felicitations, and wert extolled by him to Uma and others—may Thou, Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to give me shelter!

CANTO 30

THE INCARNATION AS VAMANA

शक्रेण संयति हतोऽपि बलिर्महात्मा
शुक्रेण जीविततनुः क्रतुवर्धितोष्मा ।
विक्रान्तिमान् भयनिलीनसुरां त्रिलोकीं
चक्रे वशे स तव चक्रमुखादभीतः ॥ 1 ॥

1. The high-souled Bali, though killed in battle by Sakra (Indra), was revived by Sukra, the Guru of the Asuras (by his occult powers). Performing the sacrifice Viswajit, he grew in prowess, and (being a descendant of Prahlada) was not afraid of Thy discus. So the Devas had to flee in fear before the victorious Bali, who thus became the master of all the three worlds.

पुत्रार्तिदर्शनवशा-ददितिर्विषण्णा
तं काश्यपं निजपतिं शरणं प्रपन्ना ।
त्वत्पूजनं तदुदितं हि पयोव्रताख्यं
सा द्वादशाह-मचरत् त्वयि भक्तिपूर्णा ॥ 2 ॥

2. Aditi, the mother of the gods, being very much aggrieved at the defeat of her children, the Devas, sought her husband Kasyapa's help. As advised by him, she observed a form of Thy worship known as Payovrata for twelve days with great devotional fervour.

तस्यावधौ त्वयि निलीनमतेरमुष्याः
श्यामश्चतुर्भुजवपुः स्वयमाविरासीः ।

नम्रां च तामिह भवत्तनयो भवेयं
गोप्यं मदीक्षणमिति प्रलपन्नयासीः ॥ ३ ॥

3. At the end of the worship, Thou, with four arms and blue complexion, didst manifest Thyself before her whose mind was absorbed in Thee. As she stood in humble adoration, Thou didst tell her that Thou wouldst be born as her son. Then Thou didst disappear, charging her to keep her experience a secret.

त्वं काश्यपे तपसि सन्निदधत्तदानीं
प्राप्तोऽसि गर्भमदितेः प्रणुतो विधात्रा ।
प्रासूत च प्रकटवैष्णवदिव्यरूपं
सा द्वादशीश्रवण-पुण्यदिने भवन्तम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Then manifesting Thyself in Kasyapa's austerity-born seed, Thou didst enter into the womb of Aditi. Praised by Brahma (while in the mother's womb), Thou wert soon delivered as a Divine child with evident marks of Vishnu's glory, on the auspicious day of the confluence of Sravana and Dwadasi.

पुण्याश्रमं तमभिवर्षति पुष्पवर्षै-
र्हर्षाकुले सुरगणे कृततूर्यघोषे ।
बध्वाञ्जलिं जय जयेति नुतः पितृभ्यां
त्वं तत्क्षणे पटुतमं वटुरूपमाधाः ॥ 5 ॥

5. As the Devas in high glee sounded their musical instruments and showered flowers over the place of Thy birth, and as Thy parents kept on praising Thee with hands folded in salutation, Thou didst suddenly take on the form of a talented and handsome Brahmacharin (a student of the Vedas).

तावत्प्रजापतिमुखै-रुपनीय मौञ्जी-
दण्डाजिनाक्ष-वलयादिभि-रर्च्यमानः ।
देदीप्यमानवपुरीश कृताग्निकार्य-
स्त्वं प्रास्थिथा बलिगृहं प्रकृताश्वमेधम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. After Prajapati Kasyapa and the sages had invested Thee with the sacred thread and offered the other emblems of a Brahmacharin like the girdle, deer skin, staff, beads etc., Thou didst perform the rites connected with the sacred fire, and in Thy resplendent Brahmacharin form proceed to the place where the Asura king Bali was performing the grand sacrifice known as the Aswamedha.

गात्रेण भाविमहिमोचित-गौरवं प्रा-
ग्व्यावृण्वतेव धरणीं चलयन्नयासीः ।
छत्रं परोष्मतिरणार्थ-मिवादधानो
दण्डं च दानवजनेष्विव सन्निधातुम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Thou didst march forward, causing tremors on the earth at every step, as if in indication of the future manifestation of Thy might; holding an umbrella, as if to ward off the heat of aggressiveness of all opponents; and carrying a staff, as if to crush the Asuras with it.

तां नर्मदोत्तरतटे हयमेधशाला-
मासेदुषि त्वयि रुचा तव रुद्धनेत्रैः ।
भास्वान् किमेष दहनो नु सनत्कुमारो
योगी नु कोऽयमिति शुक्रमुखैः शशङ्के ॥ 8 ॥

8. As Thou didst arrive at the sacrificial campus on the northern bank of the Narmada, Sukra and others, with their eyes dimmed by Thy glory, exclaimed in wonder, 'Who could this be! Is he the sun-god? Is he the god of fir r is he the sage Sanatkumara?'

आनीतमाशु भृगुभि-र्महसाभिभूतै-
स्त्वां रम्यरूपमसुरः पुलकावृताङ्गः ।
भक्त्या समेत्य सुकृती परिणिज्य पादौ
तत्तोयमन्वधृत मूर्धनि तीर्थतीर्थम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Thou wert received and led by Bhrigu and others, who were overwhelmed by Thy majestic and charming form, to the presence of the fortunate Asura king who approached

Thee with thrills of devotion, washed Thy feet, and sprinkled his own head with that water, which (by its contact with Thy feet) was efficacious enough to enhance the sanctity of even sacred waters.

प्रह्लादवंशजतया क्रतुभिर्द्विजेषु
विश्वासतो नु तदिदं दितिजोऽपि लेभे ।
यत्ते पदाम्बु गिरिशस्य शिरोभिलाल्यं
स त्वं विभो गुरुपुरालय पालयेथाः ॥ 10 ॥

10. Though an Asura, Bali was fortunate enough—may be because of his birth in Prahlada's line, or because of his performance of many sacrifices, or because of the services he had rendered to holy men—to be blessed with that water flowing from Thy feet, which is holy enough even for Siva to sanctify his head with. May Thou, O All-pervading One, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 31

VAMANA BLESSING BALI

प्रीत्या दैत्यस्तव तनुमहःप्रेक्षणात् सर्वथाऽपि
त्वामाराध्यन्नजित रचयन्नञ्जलिं सञ्जगाद ।
मत्तः किं ते समभिलषितं विप्रसूनो वद त्वं
वित्तं भक्तं भवनमवनिं वाऽपि सर्वं प्रदास्ये ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Invincible One! Impressed by the sight of Thy majestic form, the Asura king honoured Thee in every way, and with palms folded in salutation said: 'O youthful Brahmacharin! Please say what you expect of me. Is it wealth, or food, or house, or land, or all of them? I shall give you whatever you ask for'.

तामक्षीणां बलिगिरमुपाकर्ण्य कारुण्यपूर्णोऽ-
प्यस्योत्सेकं शमयितुमना दैत्यवंशं प्रशंसन् ।

भूमिं पादत्रयपरिमितां प्रार्थयामासिथ त्वं
सर्वं देहीति तु निगदिते कस्य हास्यं न वा स्यात् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Hearing the bold words of Bali, Thou, though full of kindness towards him, didst desire to humble his pride. Extolling the generosity of Asuras, Thou didst ask for earth measurable by three steps of Thy feet. To ask for all his possessions would, indeed, have been ridiculous!

विश्वेशं मां त्रिपदमिह किं याचसे बालिशस्त्वं
सर्वां भूमिं वृणु किममुनेत्यालपत्त्वां स दृप्यन् ।
यस्माद्दर्पात् त्रिपदपरिपूर्त्यक्षमः क्षेपवादान्
बन्धं चासा-वगमदतदर्होऽपि गाढोपशान्त्यै ॥ 3 ॥

3. 'How is it that you beg of me, the master of the worlds, only for three feet of earth? You must be a fool to do so. Why not ask for the whole earth?' So said Bali to Thee in overweening pride. It was because this pride (indicated by the above words) had to be eradicated before he became eligible for Eternal Peace, that he came to be subjected to abusive words and bondage on his failure to gift full three feet of land, however undeserving he might be of this in other respects.

पादत्रय्या यदि न मुदितो विष्टपैर्नापि तुष्ये-
दित्युक्तेऽस्मिन् वरद भवते दातुकामेऽथ तोयम् ।
दैत्याचार्यस्तव खलु परीक्षार्थिनः प्रेरणात्तं
मा मा देयं हरिरयमिति व्यक्तमेवाबभाषे ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'If one is not satisfied with three feet of earth, one will not be satisfied even by gaining the three worlds!' To Thee who thus replied, Bali was about to pour out the pre-gift water oblation, when Thou, the indweller in all, for testing Bali's truthfulness and generosity, prompted Sukra, the Guru of the Asuras, to warn Bali openly thus: 'Make not, make not this gift to him! He is Vishnu (come on behalf of the gods to defeat you)!'

याचत्येवं यदि स भगवान् पूर्णकामोऽस्मि सोऽहं
दास्याम्येव स्थिरमिति वदन् काव्यशप्तोऽपि दैत्यः ।
विन्ध्यावल्या निजदयितया दत्तपाद्याय तुभ्यं
चित्रं चित्रं सकलमपि स प्रार्पयत्तोयपूर्वम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'If it is the Lord that begs, I am indeed blessed! I shall certainly make the gift,' saying so with determination in spite of Sukra's curse, and having Thy feet washed by his queen Vindhyavali, he poured the pre-gift water, and lo! made an offering of all his possessions to Thee.

निस्सन्देहं दितिकुलपतौ त्वय्यशेषार्पणं तद्-
व्यातन्वाने मुमुचुर्ऋषयः सामराः पुष्पवर्षम् ।
दिव्यं रूपं तव च तदिदं पश्यतां विश्वभाजा-
मुच्चैरुच्चै-रवृधदवधीकृत्य विश्वाण्डभाण्डम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. When the Asura king made a gift of all his possessions to Thee without the least hesitation, the Rishis and the Devas showered a rain of flowers. And as the worlds looked on, Thy form grew up higher and higher to cosmic dimensions.

त्वत्पादाग्रं निजपदगतं पुण्डरीकोद्भवोऽसौ
कुण्डीतोयै-रसिचदपुनाद्यज्जलं विश्वलोकान् ।
हर्षोत्कर्षात् सुबहु ननृते खेचरै-रुत्सवेऽस्मिन्
भेरीं निघ्नन् भुवनमचर-ज्जाम्बवान् भक्तिशाली ॥ 7 ॥

7. When Thy feet extended to his realm of Satyaloka, the Lotus-born Brahma washed them with water from his water pot, and it was this water that became the holy Ganga that purifies the world. On that happy occasion the sky-faring Vidyadharas and Gandharvas danced in ecstasy, while the devotee Jambavan traversed the world announcing the glad tidings by beat of drum.

तावद्दैत्या-स्त्वनुमतिमृते भर्तुरारब्धयुद्धा
देवोपेतै-र्भवदनुचरैः सङ्गता भङ्गमापन् ।

कालात्माऽयं वसति पुरतो यद्वशात् प्राग्जिताः स्मः
किं वो युद्धैरिति बलिगिरा तेऽथ पातालमापुः ॥ 8 ॥

8. Thereupon the Asuras opened hostilities with the Devas without the sanction of their master Bali, and had to suffer defeat at the hands of Thy emissaries who were fighting on the side of the Devas. Bali then said to them: 'Here stands opposed to us the spirit of Time, by whose favour alone we obtained success in the past. Of what avail is your fight now?' Thus directed by Bali, the Asuras retreated to the nether world, the Patala.

पाशैर्बद्धं पतगपतिना दैत्यमुच्चैरवादी-
स्तार्त्तीयीकं दिश मम पदं किं न विश्वेश्वरोऽसि ।
पादं मूर्ध्नि प्रणय भगवन्नित्यकम्पं वदन्तं
प्रह्लादस्तं स्वयमुपगतो मानयन्नस्तवीत्त्वाम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. To the Asura king, who was by this time tied up with ropes by Thy attendant Garuda, Thou didst say loudly; 'Are you not the master of all the worlds? Where is the place for me to place the third step (as all the spheres have already been measured by two steps)?' Without the least tremor, Bali asked the Lord to place the third step on his (Bali's) own head, whereupon Prahlada, the grand-father of Bali, himself appeared by the side of Bali, and began to sing Thy praise.

दर्पोच्छित्त्यै विहितमखिलं दैत्य सिद्धोऽसि पुण्यै-
र्लोकस्तेऽस्तु त्रिदिवविजयी वासवत्वं च पश्चात् ।
मत्सायुज्यं भज च पुनरित्यन्वगृह्णा बलिं तं
विप्रैः सन्तानितमखवरः पाहि वातालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'O son of Diti! In order to curb your pride I have done all this. You are blessed by your many good deeds. You will have sway over the realm known as Sutala, which excels even Swarga (the heaven). Afterwards, in another age, you will become Indra, and later still, you will attain to union with Me.' Blessing Bali thus, Thou hadst the great

sacrifice Viswajit (which Bali had started) completed by the priests. O Lord of Guruvayoor, deign to protect me!

CANTO 32

THE INCARNATION AS FISH

पुरा हयग्रीवमहासुरेण षष्टान्तरान्तोद्यदकाण्डकल्पे ।
निद्रोन्मुख-ब्रह्ममुखाद्धृतेषु वेदेष्वधित्सः किल मत्स्यरूपम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. In times of yore, during the Pralaya that followed the rule of the sixth Manu Chakshusha, when Brahma was engulfed in sleep, the Vedas were stolen from his mouth (mind, memory) by the powerful Asura Hayagriva, and in order to restore the Vedas and revive their knowledge, Thou didst desire to incarnate Thyself as the Divine Fish.

सत्यव्रतस्य द्रमिलाधिभर्तु-र्नदीजले तर्पयतस्तदानीम् ।
कराञ्जलौ सञ्ज्वलिताकृतिस्त्व-मदृश्यथाः कश्चन बालमीनः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Then, Thou didst appear as a tiny fish of lustrous form in the water held in the joined palms of the royal sage Satyavrata, king of Dramila, while doing the Tarpana rite in the river Kritamala.

क्षिप्रं जले त्वां चकितं विलोक्य निन्येऽम्बुपात्रेण मुनिः स्वगेहम् ।
स्वल्पैरहोभिः कलशीं च कूपं वापीं सरश्चानशिषे विभो त्वम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Seeing Thee tremble with fear from other fish when put into the river, Satyavrata look Thee home in his water-jug, but within a few days Thou didst outgrow the pot, a well, a tank and even a lake.

योगप्रभावाद्-भवदाज्ञयैव नीतस्ततस्त्वं मुनिना पयोधिम् ।
पृष्टोऽमुना कल्पदिदृक्षुमेनं सप्ताहमास्वेति वदन्नयासीः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Then according to Thy order, the Rajarshi put Thee into the sea by his Yogic power. On his expressing a desire

to witness the Pralaya Thou didst ask him to wait for seven days. Then didst Thou disappear.

प्राप्ते त्वदुक्तेऽहनि वारिधारा-परिप्लुते भूमितले मुनीन्द्रः ।
सप्तर्षिभिः सार्धमपारवारि-ण्युद्घूर्णमानः शरणं ययौ त्वाम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. By the day appointed, the earth got inundated with Pralaya waters. The royal sage and the Saptarshis, finding themselves floundering in a limitless expanse of water, sought refuge in Thee.

धरां त्वदादेशकरीमवाप्तां नौरूपिणी-मारुरुहुस्तदा ते ।
तत्कम्पकम्प्रेषु च तेषु भूय-स्त्वमम्बुधे-राविरभूर्महीयान् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thereupon the earth, ever obedient to Thee, appeared in the shape of a boat, which they boarded for safety. And when they began to tremble in that boat rolling heavily in the expansive waters, Thou didst again appear in the ocean as a Fish, having grown into enormous dimensions.

झषाकृतिं योजनलक्षदीर्घां दधान-मुच्चैस्तरतेजसं त्वाम् ।
निरीक्ष्य तुष्टा मुनयस्त्वदुक्त्या त्वत्तुङ्गशृङ्गे तरणिं बबन्धुः ॥ 7 ॥

7. The sages were delighted to see Thee in the Fish form, about a lakh of Yojanas in length and possessed of exceeding glory At Thy command, they tied the boat to Thy high and prominent antenna.

आकृष्टनौको मुनिमण्डलाय प्रदर्शयन विश्वजगद्विभागान् ।
संस्तूयमानो नृवरेण तेन ज्ञानं परं चोपदिशन्नचारीः ॥ 8 ॥

8. Pulling the boat through the waters, Thou didst show the sages all the regions of the world, and hymned and praised by the king, bestow on him the knowledge of the Atman.

कल्पावधौ सप्तमुनीन् पुरोवत् प्रस्थाप्य सत्यव्रतभूमिप तम् ।
वैवस्वताख्यं मनुमादधानः क्रोधाद्धयग्रीव-मभिद्रुतोऽभूः ॥ 9 ॥

9. At the end of the Pralaya, Thou didst reinstall the seven sages in their places and bestow on king Satyavrata the status of Manu Vaivasvata, and then didst attack the demon Hayagriva in great wrath.

स्वतुङ्गश्रृङ्ग-क्षतवक्षसं तं निपात्य दैत्यं निगमान् गृहीत्वा ।
विरिञ्चये प्रीतहृदे ददानः प्रभञ्जनागारपते प्रपायाः ।। 10 ।।

10. May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, who didst then kill the demon by piercing his chest with Thy horn, and retrieving the Vedas, restore them to a delighted Brahma—be pleased to protect me.

CANTO 33

THE STORY OF AMBARISHA

वैवस्वताख्य-मनुपुत्र-नभागजात-
नाभागनामक-नरेन्द्रसुतोऽम्बरीषः ।
सप्तार्णवावृत-महीदयितोऽपि रेमे
त्वत्सङ्गिषु त्वयि च मग्नमनाः सदैव ।। 1 ।।

1. Ambarisha, the son of Nabhaga and grandson of Manu Vaivaswata, though ruling the whole world surrounded by the seven seas, delighted only in spending all his time in thoughts of Thee and Thy devotees.

त्वत्प्रीतये सकलमेव वितन्वतोऽस्य
भक्त्यैव देव नचिरादभृथाः प्रसादम् ।
येनास्य याचनमृतेऽप्यभिरक्षणार्थं
चक्रं भवान् प्रविततार सहस्रधारम् ।। 2 ।।

2. As he performed all his actions, both sacred and secular, in complete dedication to Thee, his whole-hearted devotion by itself brought Thy grace on him very soon.

Therefore, though unsought, Thou didst commission Thy many-pointed Divine Discus Sudarsana to protect him.

स द्वादशीव्रतमथो भवदर्चनार्थं
वर्षं दधौ मधुवने यमुनोपकण्ठे ।
पत्न्या समं सुमनसा महतीं वितन्वन्
पूजां द्विजेषु विसृजन् पशुषष्टिकोटिम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. He along with his pious wife observed, in adoration of Thee, the sacred fast of Ekadasi, along with the rites of Dwadasi on the following day, for a whole year in Madhuvana on the banks of the Yamuna, and as a part of its observance, honoured holy men with many gifts including that of vast numbers of cows.

तत्राथ पारणदिने भवदर्चनान्ते
दुर्वाससाऽस्य मुनिना भवनं प्रपेदे ।
भोक्तुं वृतश्च स नृपेण परार्तिशीलो
मन्दं जगाम यमुनां नियमान् विधास्यन् ॥ 4 ॥

4. On the Dwadasi day when Thy worship was about to be concluded with the breaking of the fast, the sage Durvasas arrived at the king's abode, and was invited by him to take his food at the end of the rites. The sage, who was by nature inconsiderate and oppressive, went leisurely to the Yamuna to perform the mid-day rites (that are to be done before food).

राज्ञाऽथ पारणमुहूर्त-समाप्तिखेदा-
द्वारैव पारणमकारि भवत्परेण ।
प्राप्तो मुनिस्तदथ दिव्यदृशा विजानन्
क्षिप्यन् क्रुधोद्धृतजटो वितितान कृत्याम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. The pious king grew anxious that (owing to the delay caused by Durvasas) the time for breaking the fast would expire, and so he completed the ritual by taking just a sip of water. The sage, coming to know of this through his occult insight, upbraided the king (for taking food before

feeding him, in violation of the rules of hospitality), and in great anger plucked off one of his matted locks and created out of it a female ogre (*kritya*) to destroy the king.

कृत्यां च तामसिधरां भुवनं दहन्ती-
मग्रेऽभिवीक्ष्य नृपतिर्न पदाच्चकम्पे ।
त्वद्भक्तबाध-मभिवीक्ष्य.सुदर्शनं ते
कृत्यानलं शलभयन् मुनिमन्वधावीत् ॥ 6 ॥

6. The king did not, however, budge an inch on seeing the fierce ogre rushing at him sword in hand and emitting fire all round. Noticing Thy devotee in danger, Thy Discus Sudarsana burnt up the fiery ogre like a flame consuming a moth and then went after the sage Durvasas.

धावन्नशेषभुवनेषु भिया स पश्यन्
विश्वत्र चक्रमपि ते गतवान् विरिञ्चम् ।
कः कालचक्र-मतिलङ्घयती-त्यपास्तः
शर्वं ययौ स च भवन्तमवन्दतैव ॥ 7 ॥

7. The sage began darting across world after world with the Discus chasing him. Brahma, whose shelter he sought, sent him away with the remark that nothing could be done against the wheel of Time. Siva, too, when approached, only made salutations to Thee.

भूयो भवन्निलयमेत्य मुनिं नमन्तं
प्रोचे भवानहमृषे ननु भक्तदासः ।
ज्ञानं तपश्च विनयान्वितमेव मान्यं
याह्यम्बरीषपदमेव भजेति भूमन् ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Lord! When the sage finally reached Thy Abode and saluted Thee, Thou didst say 'O sage, I am the servant of my devotees. Knowledge and austerity can evoke respect only when combined with modesty. Seek shelter, therefore at the feet of Ambarisha himself.'

तावत्समेत्य मुनिना स गृहीतपादो
राजाऽपसृत्य भवदस्त्र-मसावनौषीत् ।
चक्रे गते मुनिरदा-दखिलाशिषोऽस्मै
त्वद्भक्तिमागसि कृतेऽपि कृपां च शंसन् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Thereupon the sage approached Ambarisha and clasped his feet (for pardon). The king, holding back his feet (out of humility), praised Thy weapon, the Discus. On the Discus retiring, the sage praised Ambarisha for his devotion and the kindness he showed even to enemies, and wished him all happiness and prosperity.

राजा प्रतीक्ष्य मुनिमेकसमामनाश्वान्
सम्भोज्य साधु तमृषिं विसृजन् प्रसन्नम् ।
भुक्त्वा स्वयं त्वयि ततोऽपि दृढं रतोऽभूत्-
सायुज्यमाप च स मां पवनेश पायाः ॥ 10 ॥

10. The king, who had not taken food for one year awaiting the sage's return, now fed him well and sent him away in excellent spirit, after which only he took food himself. His devotion to Thee thereafter grew still firmer, and ultimately he attained liberation consisting in union with Thee. O Lord of Guruvayoor of such greatness! May Thou extend Thy protection to me.

CANTO 34

THE INCARNATION AS RAMA

गीर्वाणैरर्थ्यमानो दशमुखनिधनं कोसलेष्वृश्यशृङ्गे
पुत्रीयामिष्टिमिष्ट्वा ददुषि दशरथक्ष्माभृते पायसाग्र्यम् ।
तद्भुक्त्या तत्पुरन्ध्रीष्वपि तिसृषु समं जातगर्भासु जातो
रामस्त्वं लक्ष्मणेन स्वयमथ भरतेनापि शत्रुघ्ननाम्ना ॥ 1 ॥

1. Being implored by the Devas to bring about the destruction of the Rakshasa Ravana, Thou wert pleased to incarnate as Rama along with Lakshmana, Bharata and Satrughna as the sons of king Dasaratha of Kosala by his three queens, who conceived them simultaneously as a result of taking the divine Payasa (pudding) offered to the king by Agni, god of fire, at the special sacrificial rite for the birth of progeny, conducted on the king's behalf in Kosala by the sage Risyasringa.

कोदण्डी कौशिकस्य क्रतुवरमवितुं लक्ष्मणेनानुयातो
यातोऽभू-स्तातवाचा मुनिकथित-मनुद्वन्द्व-शान्ताध्वखेदः ।
नृणां त्राणाय बाणै-र्मुनिवचनबला-त्ताटकां पाटयित्वा
लब्ध्वास्मा-दस्त्रजालं मुनिवनमगमो देव सिद्धाश्रमाख्यम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. At the bidding of Thy father, Thou didst go, bow in hand, with Lakshmana following Thee, to provide guard for the great sacrifice (of sage Viswamitra) at the forest hermitage named Siddhasrama. On the way, relieved from the exhaustion of travel by the two Mantras imparted by the sage, Thou didst destroy, at the sage's request, the demoness Tataka for the relief of men, and receive from the sage instruction in the use of several divine missiles.

मारीचं द्रावयित्वा मखशिरसि शरै-रन्यरक्षांसि निघ्नन्
कल्यां कुर्वन्नहल्यां पथि पदरजसा प्राप्य वैदेहगेहम् ।
भिन्दान-श्चान्द्रचूडं धनुरवनिसुता-मिन्दिरामेव लब्ध्वा
राज्यं प्रातिष्ठथास्त्वं त्रिभिरपि च समं भ्रातृवीरैः सदारैः ॥ 3 ॥

3. At the start of the sacrificial rite, Thou didst drive away the demon Maricha while killing the rest. Then *en route* to the palace of Videha, Thou didst purify Ahalya of her sins by the dust of Thy feet. Next at Videha's palace Thou didst break the great bow of Siva and win Sita, the embodiment of Mahalakshmi and daughter of the Earth, as Thy consort. And finally Thou didst start on Thy return journey to Ayodhya with Thy three brothers and their newly wedded wives.

आरुन्धाने रुषान्धे भृगुकुलतिलके संक्रमय्य स्वतेजो
याते यातोऽस्ययोध्यां सुखमिह निवसन् कान्तया कान्तमूर्ते ।
शत्रुघ्नेनैकदाथो गतवति भरते मातुलस्याधिवासं
तातारब्धोऽभिषेक-स्तव किल विहतः केकयाधीशपुत्र्या ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Radiant Lord! On the way Parasurama, blind with rage, confronted Thee and met with defeat at Thy hands, and he transmitted all his powers to Thee. Thou didst then reach Ayodhya and live there happily with Sita, until one day, while Bharata, along with Satrughna, had gone to his uncle's kingdom, Thy father fixed Thy coronation, which was objected to and obstructed by Thy step-mother Kaikeyi.

तातोक्त्या यातुकामो वन-मनुजवधूसंयुत-श्चापधारः
पौरानारुध्य मार्गे गुहनिलयगतस्त्वं जटाचीरधारी ।
नावा सन्तीर्य गङ्गामधिपदवि पुनस्तं भरद्वाजमारा-
न्नत्वा तद्वाक्यहेतो-रतिसुखमवस-श्चित्रकूटे गिरीन्द्रे ॥ 5 ॥

5. Armed with bow, Thou didst start for the forest at Thy father's command, accompanied by Thy consort Sita and brother Lakshmana. After sending back the crowd of citizens (who followed Thee in grief), Thou didst reach the abode of the Nishada chief Guha. Donning the ascetic garb of bark cloth and matted locks, and crossing the Ganga in a boat, Thou didst pay obeisance to sage Bharadwaja who stayed near by, and instructed by him, camp happily on the mountain known as Chitrakuta.

श्रुत्वा पुत्रार्तिखिन्नं खलु भरतमुखात् स्वर्गयातं स्वतातं
तप्तो दत्वाऽम्बु तस्मै निदधिथ भरते पादुकां मेदिनीं च ।
अत्रिं नत्वाऽथ गत्वा वनमतिविपुलं दण्डकं चण्डकायं
हत्वा दैत्यं विराधं सुगति-मकलयश्चारु भोः शारभङ्गीम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Hearing from Bharata (who had gone to the forest to meet Thee) about the demise of Thy father from the pangs of separation from Thee, Thou didst perform the prescribed obsequies and bestow on Bharata both the kingdom and Thy sandals. Next Thou didst proceed to the dense and expansive

forest of Dandaka where Thou didst pay obeisance to the sage Atri, destroy the huge monster Viradha, and graciously give salvation to the sage Sarabhanga.

नत्वाऽगस्त्यं समस्ता-शरनिकर-सपत्राकृतिं तापसेभ्यः
प्रत्यश्रौषीः प्रियैषी तदनु च मुनिना वैष्णवे दिव्यचापे ।
ब्रह्मास्त्रे चापि दत्ते पथि पितृसुहृदं वीक्ष्य भूयो जटायुं
मोदाद्-गोदातटान्ते परिरमसि पुरा पञ्चवट्यां वधूट्या ।। 7 ।।

7. After paying respects to Agastya, Thou didst take a solemn vow before the assembled ascetics that, for their good, Thou wouldst rid the region of all the monstrous Rakshasas. Then receiving from Agastya the divine bow and weapon (Brahmastra), Thou didst travel on, meet Jatayu, the old friend of Thy father, and finally settle happily at Panchavati on the banks of the Godavari with Thy consort.

प्राप्तायाः शूर्पणख्या मदनचलधृते-रर्थनै-र्निस्सहात्मा
तां सौमित्रौ विसृज्य प्रबलतमरुषा तेन निर्लूननासाम् ।
दृष्ट्वैनां रुष्टचित्तं खरमभिपतितं दूषणं च त्रिमूर्धं
व्याहिंसी-राशरानप्य-युतसमधिकां-स्तत्क्षणा-दक्षतोष्मा ।। 8 ।।

8. Annoyed at the advances of the love-lorn Rakshasa woman Surpanakha, Thou didst direct her to Lakshmana, who in great rage cut off her nose. Furious at the sight of her disfigurement, the three Rakshasa leaders Khara, Dushana and Trisiras, attacked Thee; but Thou of unfading prowess didst easily kill them along with more than ten thousand of their Rakshasa followers.

सोदर्या प्रोक्तवार्ता-विवशदशमुखा-दिष्टमारीचमाया-
सारङ्गं सारसाक्ष्या स्पृहितमनुगतः प्रावधीर्बाणघातम् ।
तन्माया-क्रन्द निर्यापित-भवदनुजां रावणस्तामहार्षीत्
तेनार्त्तोऽपि त्वमन्तः किमपि मुदमधा-स्तद्वधोपायलाभात् ।। 9 ।।

9. The news brought by his sister Surpanakha excited Ravana very much, and to wreak vengeance, he deputed

Maricha, who appeared in front of the Ashrama in the deceptive form of a deer. To please Sita's fancy, Thou didst pursue the deer and kill it with an arrow. Hearing its false cry (in imitation of dying Rama), Thy brother Lakshmana was sent for Thy rescue by Sita, who (being now alone at the hermitage) was abducted by Ravana. Though smitten with grief at this, Thou wert only glad within, as the incident provided Thee with an occasion for Ravana's destruction.

भूयस्तन्वीं विचिन्वन्नहृत दशमुख-स्त्वद्वधूं मद्वधेने-
त्युक्त्वा याते जटायौ दिवमथ सुहृदः प्रातनोः प्रेतकार्यम् ।
गृह्णानं तं कबन्धं जघनिथ शबरीं प्रेक्ष्य पम्पातटे त्वं
सम्प्राप्तो वातसूनुं भृशमुदितमनाः पाहि वातालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. Next moving about in search of Sita, Thou didst meet the dying Jatayu who informed Thee that Ravana had abducted Sita, after inflicting fatal injuries on him (on his offering resistance for Sita's protection). When Jatayu expired, Thou didst perform Thy friend's obsequies and then proceed on Thy search, killing *en route* the obstructing monster Kabandha, bestowing salvation on the ascetic woman Sabari, and meeting to Thy great delight Hanuman, the son of the wind god, in the Pampa region. May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, deign to protect me!

CANTO 35

INCARNATION AS RAMA—(*contd.*)

नीतः सुग्रीवमैत्रीं तदनु हनुमता दुन्दुभेः कायमुच्चैः
क्षिप्त्वाङ्गुष्ठेन भूयो लुलविथ युगपत्पत्रिणा सप्त सालान् ।
हत्वा सुग्रीवघातोद्यत-मतुलबलं बालिनं व्याजवृत्त्या
वर्षावेला-मनैषी-र्विरहतरलितस्त्वं मतङ्गाश्रमान्ते ॥ 1 ॥

1. After concluding an alliance with Sugriva through the offices of Hanuman, Thou didst (in demonstrating Thy strength) fling away the dead body of the demon Dundubhi

with Thy toe, and cut asunder seven Sala trees simultaneously with a single arrow. Then adopting a strategem, Thou didst destroy the invincible Bali while he was about to kill Sugriva in a duel, and spend the rainy season in Matangashrama in pangs of separation from Sita.

सुग्रीवेणानुजोक्त्या सभयमभियता व्यूहितां वाहिनीं ता-
मृक्षाणां विक्ष्य दिक्षु द्रुतमथ दयितामार्गणाया-वनम्राम् ।
सन्देशश्चाङ्गुलीयं पवनसुतकरे प्रादिशो मोदशाली
मार्गे मार्गे ममार्गे कपिभिरपि तदा त्वत्प्रिया सप्रयासैः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Frightened by Lakshmana's admonition, Sugriva appeared before Thee and soon marshalled a large army of monkeys to search for Thy consort Sita in all quarters. Delighted with the view of the army standing in all readiness, Thou didst entrust to Hanuman a signet ring and a message for Sita. The monkeys then started on a painstaking search for Thy consort in every direction.

त्वद्वार्ताकर्णनोद्यद्गरुदुरुजवसम्पाति-सम्पातिवाक्य-
प्रोत्तीर्णार्णोधि-रन्तर्नगरि जनकजां वीक्ष्य दत्वाङ्गुलीयम् ।
प्रक्षुद्योद्यान-मक्षक्षपणचणरणः सोढबन्धो दशास्यं
दृष्ट्वा प्लुष्ट्वा च लङ्कां झटिति स हनुमान्मौलिरत्नं ददौ ते ॥

3. Sampati, who developed new wings on listening to Thy holy account, gave, before flying away, directions about Sita's whereabouts to Hanuman, who thereupon leaped over the ocean to Lanka where he met Sita and gave her the signet ring. Then he destroyed the gardens of Lanka, killed Akshakumara, the son of Ravana, in fight, put up with the bondage of Brahmastra employed by Meghanada, met Ravana, burnt Lanka, returned to the mainland, and presented to Rama the crest-jewel given by Sita as a mark of recognition.

त्वं सुग्रीवाङ्गदादि-प्रबलकपिचमू-चक्रविक्रान्तभूमी-
चक्रोऽभिक्रम्य पारेजलधि निशिचरेन्द्रानुजा-श्रीयमाणः ।
तत्प्रोक्तां शत्रुवार्तां रहसि निशमयन् प्रार्थनापार्थ्यरोष-
प्रास्ताग्नेयास्त्र-तेजस्त्रसदुदधिगिरा लब्धवान् मध्यमार्गम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Then, Thou didst start with a huge army of monkeys led by heroes like Sugriva and Angada and reach the ocean beach, when Ravana's brother Vibhishana crossed over to Thy side, took refuge in Thee and disclosed to Thee all the secrets of the enemy. As prayers failed to move the deity of the ocean to give Thee a way across, Thou in great anger, didst threaten the ocean with the fire missile, whereupon the ocean in mighty dread yielded Thee a way to cross over to Lanka.

कीशै-राशान्तरोपाहृत-गिरिनिकरैः सेतुमाधाप्य यातो
यातून्यामर्द्य दंष्ट्रा-नख-शिखरि-शिला-सालशस्त्रैः स्वसैन्यैः ।
व्याकुर्वन् सानुजस्त्वं समरभुवि परं विक्रमं शक्रजेत्रा
वेगान्नागास्त्रबद्धः पतगपति-गरुन्मारुतै-र्मोचितोऽभूः ॥ 5 ॥

5. A bridge was built across the sea with mountains brought by the monkeys from all quarters, and crossing over to Lanka along it, Thy army of monkeys attacked the Rakshasas with teeth, claws, mountains, rocks and palm trees. While Thyself and Thy brother were displaying terrific prowess in the field of battle, Indrajit, Ravana's son, immobilised Thy troops with serpent missile, from which state they soon recovered as Garuda, Thy vehicle, appeared and fanned them with his wings.

सौमित्रिस्त्वत्र-शक्तिप्रहृति-गलदसु-र्वातजानीतशैल-
घ्राणात् प्राणानुपेतो व्यकृणुत कुसृतिश्लाघिनं मेघनादम् ।
मायाक्षोभेषु वैभीषण-वचनहृत-स्तम्भनः कुम्भकर्णं
सम्प्राप्तं कम्पितोर्वीतल-मखिलचमूभक्षिणं व्यक्षिणोस्त्वम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Lakshmana was about to lose his life, struck by a powerful missile discharged by Ravana, but was revived by the smell of a medicinal herb brought by Hanuman along with the very mountain on which it grew. Lakshmana then killed in battle Meghanada (Indrajit, the son of Ravana) who was a master of magical warfare. Next by Vibhishana's counsel Thou wert freed from the stunning effect of Ravana's illusory beheading of Sita, conjured up by his magical powers. This was followed by Thy destruction of Kumbhakarna, who

had joined battle, causing tremors on earth and swallowing whole armies of monkeys.

गृह्णन् जम्भारिसंप्रेषित-रथकवचौ रावणेनाभियुद्ध्यन्
ब्रह्मास्त्रेणास्य भिन्दन् गलततिमबला-मग्निशुद्धां प्रगृह्णन् ।
देवश्रेणीवरोज्जीवित-समरमृतै-रक्षतैर्ऋक्षसङ्घै-
र्लङ्काभर्त्रा च साकं निजनगरमगाः सप्रियः पुष्पकेण ॥ 7 ॥

7. Fighting in a chariot provided by Indra along with a protective mail, Thou didst cut off the ten heads of Ravana with the Brahma missile and re-accept Sita after she had passed through an ordeal by fire. The host of monkeys wounded or killed in battle were healed and revived by the Devas. Then Thou didst go back to Thy city of Ayodhya with Thy consort and Vibhishana, now king of Lanka, in the aerial vehicle known as the Pushpaka.

प्रीतो दिव्याभिषेकै-रयुतसमधिकान् वत्सरान् पर्यरंसी-
र्मैथिल्यां पापवाचा शिव शिव किल तां गर्भिणीमभ्यहासीः ।
शत्रुघ्नेनार्दयित्वा लवणनिशिचरं प्रार्दयः शूद्रपाशं
तावद्वाल्मीकिगेहे कृतवसतिरुपासूत सीता सुतौ ते ॥ 8 ॥

8. Pleased with the crowning ceremony (conducted by Vasishta and others), Thou didst rule happily for over ten thousand years. Reacting to scandalous gossip about Sita, Thou didst abandon her, in spite of her being in the family way then. Satrughna killed Lavana, and Thou didst punish the Sudra ascetic. And Sita who was sheltered in the hermitage of Valmiki, bore Thee twin sons.

वाल्मीके-स्त्वत्सुतोद्गापित-मधुरकृते-राज्ञया यज्ञवाटे
सीतां त्वय्याप्तुकामे क्षितिमविशदसौ त्वं च कालार्थितोऽभूः ।
हेतोः सौमित्रिघाती स्वयमथ सरयूमग्न-निश्शेषभृत्यैः
साकं नाकं प्रयातो निजपदमगमो देव वैकुण्ठमाद्यम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. In Thy sacrificial hall, after Thy sons recited Valmiki's beautiful composition on Thy glorious deeds

(known as Ramayana), Thou wert counselled by that sage to take back Sita, but she disappeared into the bosom of Mother Earth. The deity of Time now requested Thee to return (to Thy abode of Vaikuntha). Thereupon Thou didst contrive to abandon Lakshmana, and didst soon go back to Thy eternal abode of Vaikuntha by submerging Thyself with all Thy attendants in the waters of the Sarayu.

सोऽयं मर्त्यावतारस्तव खलु नियतं मर्त्यशिक्षार्थमेवं
विश्लेषार्ति-निरागस्त्यजनमपि भवेत् कामधर्मातिसक्त्या ।
नो चेत् स्वात्मानुभूतेः क्व नु तव मनसो विक्रिया चक्रपाणे
स त्वं सत्त्वैकमूर्ते पवनपुरपते व्याधुनु व्याधितापान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. This human embodiment of Thine is for instructing mankind how too much attachment (Kama) will lead to pangs of separation and how extreme addiction to Dharma (the letter of the law) will push one to such Adharma as abandonment of innocent ones. Otherwise, it is unimaginable how Thou, who art ever established in the Atman-consciousness, canst ever have any weakness of mind.[14] O Thou Lord of Guruvayoor, the very embodiment of Sattva! Deign to remove my sufferings from this disease!

CANTO 36

INCARNATION AS PARASURAMA

अत्रेः पुत्रतया पुरा त्वमनसूयायां हि दत्ताभिधो
जातः शिष्यनिबन्ध-तन्द्रितमनाः स्वस्थश्चरन् कान्तया ।
दृष्टो भक्ततमेन हेहयमहीपालेन तस्मै वरा-
नष्टैश्वर्यमुखान् प्रदाय ददिथ स्वेनैव चान्ते वधम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. In ancient times Thou wert born of Anasuya as Atri's son Dattatreya. Tired of the importunities of disciples, Thou, as Datta, wandered about with Thy wife, fully immersed in the bliss of Atman. Kartavirya, king of the Hehayas, who

was a devotee of the highest order, happened to meet Thee as Datta, and (pleased with his services), Thou didst bestow on him all psychic powers and also the promise of death at Thy hands.

सत्यं कर्तुमथार्जुनस्य च वरं तच्छक्तिमात्रानतं
ब्रह्मद्वेषि तदाखिलं नृपकुलं हन्तुं च भूमेर्भरम् ।
सञ्जातो जमदग्नितो भृगुकुले त्वं रेणुकायां हरे
रामो नाम तदात्मजेष्ववरजः पित्रोरधाः सम्मदम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. In order to fulfil the boon given to Kartavirya, as also to lighten the burdens of the earth through the destruction of impious Kshatriyas who were partly held in check only by the might of Kartavirya, Thou, O Lord, wert born as Rama in the line of Bhrigus as the youngest son of Jamadagni and his wife Renuka, to the great joy of Thy parents.

लब्धाम्नायगण-श्चतुर्दशवया गन्धर्वराजे मना-
गासक्तां किल मातरं प्रति पितुः क्रोधाकुलस्याज्ञया ।
ताताज्ञातिगसोदरैः सममिमां छित्वाऽथ शान्तात् पितु-
स्तेषां जीवनयोगमापिथ वरं माता च तेऽदाद्वरान् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Ordered by Thy father, who was enraged at Thy mother for her evincing a slight interest in the Gandharva king Chitraratha, Thou, who had mastered all the Vedas by the age of fourteen, didst strike off her head along with those of Thy elder brothers who had flouted Thy father's order to do this very act. Afterwards, when Thy father's rage had subsided, Thou didst get from him as boon the revival of those whom Thou hadst slaughtered, wereupon Thy mother, too, delighted as she was with Thee, offered Thee boons.

पित्रा मातृमुदे स्तवाहृतविय-द्धेनोर्निजादाश्रमात्
प्रस्थायाथ भृगोर्गिरा हिमगिरावाराध्य गौरीपतिम् ।
लब्ध्वा तत्परशुं तदुक्तदनुजच्छेदी महास्त्रादिकं
प्राप्तो मित्रमथाकृतव्रणमुनिं प्राप्यागमः स्वाश्रमम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. In order to please Renuka, Thy father Jamadagni brought by prayer the heavenly cow Kamadhenu to his Ashrama. On the advice of Bhrigu, Thou didst go to the Himalayas and worship Siva who bestowed on Thee his battle axe and several divine missiles, with which Thou didst destroy an Asura he pointed out. Then having secured the sage Akritavrana as Thy friend and ally, Thou didst return to Thy Ashrama.

आखेटोपगतोऽर्जुनः सुरगवीसम्प्राप्त-सम्पद्गणै-
स्त्वत्पित्रा परिपूजितः पुरगतो दुर्मन्त्रिवाचा पुनः ।
गां क्रेतुं सचिवं न्ययुङ्क्त कुधिया तेनापि रुन्धन्मुनि-
प्राणक्षेप-सरोषगोहत-चमूचक्रेण वत्सो हृतः ।। 5 ।।

5. Once when king Kartaviryarjuna came hunting to the neighbourhood of Thy Ashrama, Thy father feted him with the numerous delicacies and luxuries obtained from the divine cow Kamadhenu. On his return to his capital, the king was advised by some evil counsellors to get that cow from the Ashrama. The king sent that very adviser as his emissary on this mission. When Thy father resisted his attempt to take away the cow, he was killed by the king's emissary, whereupon several warriors emerging from the furious divine cow destroyed the entire royal army. But the emissary managed to take away the young one of the cow with him.

शुक्रोज्जीवित-तातवाक्य-चलितक्रोधोऽथ सख्या समं
बिभ्रद्-ध्यात-महोदरोपनिहितं चापं कुठारं शरान् ।
आरूढः सहवाहयन्तृकरथं माहिष्मतीमाविशन्
वाग्भिर्वत्समदाशुषि क्षितिपतौ सम्प्रास्तुथाः सङ्गरम् ।। 6 ।।

6. Addressed by Thy father, who was restored to life by Sukra, Thou in great rage didst start with Thy friend, equipped with bow, battle axe and arrow as also with a chariot, horses and driver, all supplied by Mahodara (an emissary of Siva) whom Thou didst invoke in meditation. Thou didst then enter Mahishmati, the capital of Kartavirya, and on failing to get the calf released through good words, Thou didst battle with the king.

पुत्राणामयुतेन सप्तदशभि-श्चाक्षौहिणीभि-र्महा-
सेनानीभि-रनेकमन्त्रिनिवहै-र्व्याजृम्भितायोधनः ।
सद्यस्त्वत्क-कुठारबाणविदल-न्निश्शेषसैन्योत्करो
भीतिप्रद्रुतनष्ट-शिष्टतनय-स्त्वामापतद्धे हयः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Kartavirya, the king of Hehayas, fought fiercely, aided by his army of seventeen Akshouhinis and his sons numbering ten thousand, besides numerous ministers and commanders. But soon he faced Thee alone, as his whole army was shattered by Thee with arrows and battle axe, and all his sons were killed except the few who had fled in fright.

लीलावारित-नर्मदाजलवल-ल्लङ्केशगर्वापह-
श्रीमद्बाहुसहस्रमुक्त-बहुशस्त्रास्त्रं निरुन्धन्नमुम् ।
चक्रे त्वय्यथ वैष्णवेऽपि विफले बुद्ध्वा हरिं त्वां मुदा
ध्यायन्तं छितसर्वदोषमवधीः सोऽगात् परं ते पदम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Kartavirya attacked Thee in vain with numerous weapons wielded with his thousand arms—the powerful arms with which the waters of the Narmada were once impounded and then released in all force, almost drowning Ravana (who was sitting for worship on the river bank downstream). When he found that even the divine discus was impotent against Thee, Kartavirya understood that Thou wert Hari Himself. He then began to meditate on Thee, who thereupon cut all his arms and then killed him, thus enabling him to attain to Thy Abode, Vaikuntha.

भूयोऽमर्षित-हेहयात्मजगणै-स्ताते हते रेणुका-
माघ्नानां हृदयं निरीक्ष्य बहुशो घोरां प्रतिज्ञां वहन् ।
ध्यानानीतरथायुध-स्त्वमकृथा विप्रद्रुहः क्षत्रियान्
दिक्चक्रेषु कुठारयन् विशिखयन् निःक्षत्रियां मेदिनीम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. The surviving sons of Kartavirya, angry at the defeat and death of their father at Thy hands, slaughtered Thy father (as an act of vengeance). Seeing Thy sorrow-stricken

mother Renuka wailing and beating her breast, Thou didst take a terrible vow (that Thou wouldst rid the earth of Kshatriyas). With a chariot and weapons obtained through meditation, Thou didst slaughter Brahmana-phobic Kshatriyas in all quarters with Thy battle axe and arrows.

तातोज्जीवनकृन्-नृपालककुलं त्रिःसप्तकृत्वो जयन्
सन्तर्प्याथ समन्तपञ्चक-महारक्तह्रदौघे पितॄन् ।
यज्ञे क्ष्मामपि काश्यपादिषु दिशन् साल्वेन युध्यन् पुनः
कृष्णोऽमुं निहनिष्यतीति शमितो युद्धात् कुमारैर्भवान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Then reviving Thy father, defeating the tribe of Kshatriyas in battle twenty-one times, and performing obsequies to ancestors in the vast lake of Samanta-panchaka filled with the blood of the slain Kshatriyas, Thou didst give away all the conquered lands as gift to Kasyapa and other Rishis. Afterwards when Thou didst start war with Salva, Thou wert restrained from it by the sages Sanaka and others on the ground that he was destined to meet his end at the hands of Sri Krishna.

न्यस्यास्त्राणि महेन्द्रभूभृति तपस्तन्वन् पुनर्मज्जितां
गोकर्णावधि सागरेण धरणीं दृष्ट्वार्थितस्तापसैः ।
ध्यातेष्वासधृता-नलास्त्रचकितं सिन्धुं स्रुवक्षेपणा-
दुत्सार्योद्धृत-केरलो भृगुपते वातेश संरक्ष माम् ॥ 11 ॥

11. Afterwards, abandoning all weapons, Thou didst resort to the Mahendra mountain for practising austerity. Later, seeing the coastal land up to Gokarna lying submerged in the sea, Thou, at the request of the sages, didst again take bow and arrow created by Thy will, and frightening the ocean with the fire missile, reclaim from the sea the region known as Kerala after marking the extent of the required land by the throw of a sacrificial ladle.[15] O Lord of Guruvayoor (of such transcendent greatness)! Deign to protect me!

CANTO 37

PRELUDE TO SRI KRISHNA-INCARNATION

सान्द्रानन्दतनो हरे ननु पुरा दैवासुरे सङ्गरे
त्वत्कृत्ता अपि कर्मशेषवशतो ये ते न याता गतिम् ।
तेषां भूतलजन्मनां दितिभुवां भारेण दूरार्दिता
भूमिः प्राप विरिञ्चमाश्रितपदं देवैः पुरैवागतैः ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Thou whose form is constituted of condensed Bliss! Mother Earth once approached Brahma, being oppressed by the burden of large numbers of Asuras who, though killed by Thee in Devasura conflict, had, without gaining salvation, been born on earth by virtue of their Karma. The Devas had already gathered before Brahma in advance.

हा हा दुर्जनभूरिभारमथितां पाथोनिधौ पातुका-
मेतां पालय हन्त मे विवशतां सम्पृच्छ देवानिमान् ।
इत्यादिप्रचुरप्रलापविवशा-मालोक्य धाता महीं
देवानां वदनानि वीक्ष्य परितो दध्यौ भवन्तं हरे ॥ 2 ॥

2. 'Alas! Save me from sinking down to the depths of Causal Waters under the weight of evil-minded persons! These assembled Devas, if asked, will tell you about my miserable condition,' so complained the Earth Deity in utter distress. Looking at her, as also seeing the expression on the faces of the Devas, Brahma began to think of Thee.

ऊचे चाम्बुजभूरमूनयि सुराः सत्यं धरित्र्या वचो
नन्वस्या भवतां च रक्षणविधौ दक्षो हि लक्ष्मीपतिः ।
सर्वे शर्वपुरस्सरा वयमितो गत्वा पयोवारिधिं
नत्वा तं स्तुमहे जवादिति ययुः साकं तवाकेतनम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Presently, the Lotus-born Brahma said: 'O Devas! The words of the Earth Deity are true. Lord Mahavishnu is the one competent Divinity to protect her as well as you. Let all of us, with Siva as our leader, go to the shores of the

Milk Ocean, and worship and praise Mahavishnu.' So saying, Brahma, with all the others, went towards Thy Abode without delay.

ते मुग्धानिलशालि दुग्धजलधेस्तीरं गताः सङ्गता
यावत्त्वत्पद-चिन्तनैकमनस-स्तावत् स पाथोजभूः ।
त्वद्वाचं हृदये निशम्य सकला-नानन्दयन्नूचिवा-
नाख्यातः परमात्मना स्वयमहं वाक्यं तदाकर्ण्यताम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. All of them together then went to the shore of the Milk Ocean where a pleasant breeze was blowing. There, while all were absorbed in meditation on Thee, Brahma heard Thy voice within and declared to the joy of all: 'The Supreme Spirit has communicated a message to me. Hear ye all, as I declare it!

जाने दीनदशामहं दिविषदां भूमेश्च भीमैर्नृपै-
स्तत्क्षेपाय भवामि यादवकुले सोऽहं समग्रात्मना ।
देवा वृष्णिकुले भवन्तु कलया देवाङ्गनाश्चावनौ
मत्सेवार्थमिति त्वदीयवचनं पाथोजभू-रूचिवान् ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'I am aware how the high-handed kings have brought the Devas and the Earth Deity to a miserable plight. For the destruction of these evil ones, I shall embody Myself with all My majesties in the clan of the Yadus. Let the Devas and their women be born on earth among the Vrishnis for My service.' Thus did the Lotus-born Brahma communicate Thy message.

श्रुत्वा कर्णरसायनं तव वचः सर्वेषु निर्वापित-
स्वान्तेष्वीश गतेषु तावक-कृपापीयूष-तृप्तात्मसु ।
विख्याते मथुरापुरे किल भवत्सान्निध्यपुण्योत्तरे
धन्यां देवकनन्दना-मुदवहद्राजा स शूरात्मजः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Hearing Thy message, which was like veritable nectar to their ears, they all went to their respective places, deriving satisfaction from Thy sweet words. At this time,

in the famous city of Mathura, rendered holy by Thy presence, king Sura's son Vasudeva was celebrating his marriage with Devaki, the virtuous daughter of Devaka.

उद्वाहावसितौ तदीयसहजः कंसोऽथ सम्मानय-
न्नेतौ सूततया गतः पथि रथे व्योमोत्थया त्वद्गिरा ।
अस्यास्त्वा-मतिदुष्टमष्टमसुतो हन्तेति हन्तेरितः
सन्त्रासात् स तु हन्तुमन्तिकगतां तन्वीं कृपाणीमधात् ॥ 7 ॥

7. At the end of the marriage rites, Kamsa, the brother of Devaki, in order to honour the couple, himself drove them in a chariot along the highway. Just then, hearing Thy announcement, emanating as a sourceless voice from the skies, that the eighth child of that lady would kill his wicked self, Kamsa got frightened and drew his sword to kill Devaki (and thus safeguard himself against any possible danger from her future offspring.)

गृह्णानश्चिकुरेषु तां खलमतिः शौरेश्चिरं सान्त्वनै-
र्नो मुञ्चन् पुनरात्मजार्पणगिरा प्रीतोऽथ यातो गृहान् ।
आद्यं त्वत्सहजं तथार्पितमपि स्नेहेन नाहन्नसौ
दुष्टानामपि देव पुष्टकरुणा दृष्टा हि धीरेकदा ॥ 8 ॥

8. The wicked Kamsa, who held Devaki by the hair (with the resolve to kill), would not release her in spite of all the conciliatory words of Vasudeva. But when he was told that all the sons born of her would be surrendered to him, he was pleased and went home (without killing Devaki). When Thy first brother was born, he was accordingly handed over to Kamsa, but out of love, he would not kill the child. For, O Lord, even wicked people are once in a way found to be extremely kind!

तावत्त्वन्मनसैव नारदमुनिः प्रोचे स भोजेश्वरं
यूयं नन्वसुराः सुराश्च यदवो जानासि किं न प्रभो ।
मायावी स हरिर्भवद्वधकृते भावी सुरप्रार्थना-
दित्याकर्ण्य यदूनदूधुनदसौ शौरेश्च सूनूनहन् ॥ 9 ॥

9. At this juncture, the well-known Rishi Narada, prompted by Thee, went to Kamsa, the king of the Bhojas, and said: 'O great king! Don't you know that you are all of Asuric origin while the Yadus partake of the nature of the Devas. Invoked by the Devas, Hari, the master of mysterious powers, is going to be born for the destruction of you of Asuric origin.' Warned thus, Kamsa scattered the tribe of Yadus from their territory, and put the children of Vasudeva to death.

प्राप्ते सप्तमगर्भतामहिपतौ त्वत्प्रेरणान्मायया
नीते माधव रोहिणीं त्वमपि भोः सच्चित्सुखैकात्मकः ।
देवक्या जठरं विवेशिथ विभो संस्तूयमानः सुरैः
स त्वं कृष्ण विधूय रोगपटलीं भक्तिं परां देहि मे ।। 10 ।।

10. O Lord! When Devaki became pregnant for the seventh time, the foetus, which was the embodiment of none other than Adisesha, was removed from her womb to that of Rohini by Maya at Thy command. Then, O all-pervading Being, Thou, who art none but Sat-chid-ananda, entered the womb of Devaki, while the Devas praised Thee with songs. O Krishna, Thou of such power and glory, mayest Thou deign to cure me of my illness and bestow on me supreme devotion!

CANTO 38

BIRTH OF SRI KRISHNA

आनन्दरूप भगवन्नयि तेऽवतारे प्राप्ते प्रदीप्त-भवदङ्ग-निरीयमाणैः ।
कान्तिव्रजैरिव घनाघनमण्डलैर्द्या-मावृण्वती विरुरुचे किल वर्षवेला ।।

1. O Lord! Thou Embodiment of Bliss! When Thy descent was near at hand, the rainy season made its appearance, covering the skies (as if to herald Thy coming) with heavy clouds whose dark glory looked like an emanation from the bluish radiance of Thy divine Form.

आशासु शीतलतरासु पयोदतोयै-
राशासिताप्तिविवशेषु च सज्जनेषु ।
नैशाकरोदयविधौ निशि मध्यमायां
क्लेशापहस्त्रिजगतां त्वमिहाविरासीः ॥ 2 ॥

2. When all the quarters had been cooled by the rains, when the minds of all good men were overpowered with the joy of the impending fulfilment of their cherished longings, when at the dead of night the moon had just arisen—then didst Thou arrive on earth, embodied as Sri Krishna.

बाल्यस्पृशाऽपि वपुषा दधुषा विभूतीरुद्यत्किरीट-कटकाङ्गद-हारभासा ।
शङ्खारिवारिज-गदापरिभासितेन मेघासितेन परिलेसिथ सूतिगेहे ॥

3. Thou didst shine in the lying-in room with a form, which, though that of a child, was endowed with all the divine majesties of Mahavishnu, with a shining diadem, bracelets, shoulder ornaments and necklace; with conch, discus, lotus and mace in the four hands; and with a complexion blue like that of a rain cloud.

वक्षःस्थलीसुखनिलीन-विलासिलक्ष्मी-मन्दाक्षलक्षितकटाक्ष-विमोक्षभेदैः ।
तन्मन्दिरस्य खलकंस-कृतामलक्ष्मीमुन्मार्जयन्निव विरेजिथ वासुदेव ॥

4. O Lord who art born as the son of Vasudeva! Thou didst shine there, as Lakshmi, who is ever inseparably present on Thy chest in all her glory, cast her glances of varied graces all around, as if to disperse the oppressive wretchedness that reigned in the prison-house of the wicked Kamsa.

शौरिस्तु धीरमुनिमण्डल-चेतसोऽपि
दूरस्थितं वपुरुदीक्ष्य निजेक्षणाभ्याम् ।
आनन्दबाष्प-पुलकोद्गम-गद्गदार्द्र-
स्तुष्टाव दृष्टिमकरन्दरसं भवन्तम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. When Vasudeva saw, with his very physical eyes, Thy form which wise sages could not conceive even in their minds, he felt overwhelmed, and with brimming eyes, thrills

of joy, and chocking voice, began to praise Thee, who didst appear to be like nectar for the bee of his eyes.

देव प्रसीद परपूरुष तापवल्ली-निर्लूनिदात्र समनेत्र कलाविलासिन् ।
खेदानपाकुरु कृपागुरुभिः कटाक्षै-रित्यादि तेन मुदितेन चिरं नुतोऽभूः ॥

6. 'O Supreme Being! Thy playful glances form a veritable knife that cuts asunder the creeper of human woes. O Lord! Be propitious, and eradicate my woes by Thy glances brimming with mercy!' Thus did he praise Thee with joy for a long time.

मात्रा च नेत्रसलिलास्तृत-गात्रवल्या
स्तोत्रैरभिष्टुतगुणः करुणालयस्त्वम् ।
प्राचीनजन्मयुगलं प्रतिबोध्य ताभ्यां
मातुर्गिरा दधिथ मानुषबालवेषम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Thou, a veritable ocean of mercy, was next praised by Thy mother Devaki, whose beautiful body was bathed in tears of joy. Then explaining to them how Thou wert their issue in two previous births, Thou didst assume the form of a human infant at Thy mother's request.

त्वत्प्रेरितस्तदनु नन्दतनूजया ते
व्यत्यासमारचयितुं स हि शूरसूनुः ।
त्वां हस्तयोरधित चित्तविधार्यमार्यै-
रम्भोरुहस्थ-कलहंस-किशोर-रम्यम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. At Thy prompting, Vasudeva, with a view to exchanging Thee with Nanda's daughter, took Thee into his hands as one takes a beautiful fledgling of a swan from a lotus flower—Thee whom wise men hold in their hearts in meditation.

जाता तदा पशुपसद्मनि योगनिद्रा
निद्राविमुद्रित-मथाकृत पौरलोकम् ।
त्वत्प्रेरणात् किमिह चित्रमचेतनैर्यद्-
द्वारैः स्वयं व्यघटि सङ्घटितैः सुगाढम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. At the same time, in the house of the cowherd-chieftain Nandagopa was born as a female infant, Thy Maya, also known as Yoganidra (mystic slumber), who induced the stillness of deep sleep into the whole population in the region, at Thy behest. What wonder is there in this, when it is remembered that even unconscious entities like fastened doors opened by themselves for Vasudeva (by the power of that Maya)!

शेषेण भूरिफणवारित-वारिणाऽथ
स्वैरं प्रदर्शितपथो मणिदीपितेन ।
त्वां धारयन् स खलु धन्यतमः प्रतस्थे
सोऽयं त्वमीश मम नाशय रोगवेगान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Vasudeva, the most fortunate of men, started with Thee in his hands to Gokula, while the serpent Adisesha protected him from rain with his numerous hoods bearing brilliant gems that illumined the path he had to traverse. Mayest Thou, O Lord of such exceeding prowess, deign to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 39

STORY OF YOGA MAYA

भवन्तमयमुद्वहन् यदुकुलोद्वहो निस्सरन्
ददर्श गगनोच्चलज्-जलभरां कलिन्दात्मजाम् ।
अहो सलिलसञ्चयः स पुनरैन्द्रजालोदितो
जलौघ इव तत्क्षणात् प्रपदमेयता-माययौ ॥ 1 ॥

1. Proceeding with Thee in his arms, Vasudeva, the leader of the Yadu clan, saw before him the swollen Kalindi whose waters seemed to touch the skies. But lo! (as he crossed it), all that water came only up to his ankles, as if it were all an illusory flood caused by magic.

प्रसुप्तपशुपालिकां निभृत-मारुदद्वालिका-
मपावृतकवाटिकां पशुपवाटिकामाविशन् ।
भवन्तमयमर्पयन् प्रसवतल्पके तत्पदा-
द्वहन् कपटकन्यकां स्वपुरमागतो वेगतः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Entering the cowherd-chieftain's house whose doors were all wide open and whose female inhabitants were fast asleep, Vasudeva placed Thee on the labour cot and took from there into his hand the seeming female infant (Yoga Maya), and quickly proceeded to his house.

ततस्त्वदनुजारव-क्षपित-निद्रवेगद्रवद्-
भटोत्कर-निवेदित-प्रसववार्तयै-वार्तिमान् ।
विमुक्त-चिकुरोत्कर-स्त्वरित-मापतन् भोजरा-
डतुष्ट इव दृष्टवान् भगिनिकाकरे कन्यकाम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Awakened by the cries of Thy sister, the prison guards hastened to inform Kamsa of the child-birth, whereupon, stricken with fear, he rushed to the spot with dishevelled hair, but was surprised and confused to find a girl in his sister's hand (not knowing how she could be his expected antagonist).

ध्रुवं कपटशालिनो मधुहरस्य माया भवे-
दसाविति किशोरिकां भगिनिका-करालिङ्गिताम् ।
द्विपो नलिनिकान्तरादिव मृणालिका-माक्षिप-
न्नयं त्वदनुजामजा-मुपलपट्टके पिष्टवान् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Convinced that the adoption of the form of a female child was a trick of the deceitful Vishnu, Kamsa pulled out the tender infant—the beginningless Maha Maya manifesting as Thy sister—from the tight embrace of Devaki, even as an elephant pulls out a tender lotus stalk from a pond, and dashed it on a rocky slab.

ततो भवदुपासको झटिति मृत्युपाशादिव
प्रमुच्य तरसैव सा समधिरूढ-रूपान्तरा ।
अधस्तल-मजग्मुषी विकस-दष्टबाहुस्फुरन्-
महायुधमहो गता किल विहायसा दिद्युते ॥ 5 ॥

5. Liberating herself at once from the clutches of Kamsa, just as Thy votary does from the noose of death, she rose up and shone in the sky, up above the earth, transfiguring herself into a goddess of eight arms wielding divine weapons.

नृशंसतर कंस ते किमु मया विनिष्पिष्टया
बभूव भवदन्तकः क्वचन चिन्त्यतां ते हितम् ।
इति त्वदनुजा विभो खलमुदीर्य तं जग्मुषी
मरुद्गणपणायिता भुवि च मन्दिराण्येयुषी ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'O Cruel-hearted Kamsa! Of what avail is it to you to dash me on the stone! Your destroyer is already born elsewhere. Look then to your own safety.' Addressing the debased villain Kamsa thus, Thy sister Maha Maya departed to her Abode amidst the praises of the Devas, while manifesting herself at the same time in many holy places on earth for worship by devotees.

प्रगे पुनरगात्मजा-वचनमीरिता भूभुजा
प्रलम्ब-बक-पूतना-प्रमुखदानवा मानिनः ।
भवन्निधनकाम्यया जगति बभ्रमुर्निर्भयाः
कुमारकविमारकाः किमिव दुष्करं निष्कृपैः ॥ 7 ॥

7. In the morning, Kamsa conveyed the words of Maha Maya, the daughter of the mountains, to his haughty demoniacal allies like Pralamba, Baka, Putana and others, who, intent on Thy destruction, began to stalk the land, killing infants wholesale. Indeed, no cruelty is too much for the merciless!

ततः पशुपमन्दिरे त्वयि मुकुन्द नन्दप्रिया-
प्रसूतिशयनेशये रुदति किञ्चिदञ्चत्पदे ।

विबुध्य वनिताजनै-स्तनयसम्भवे घोषिते
मुदा किमु वदाम्यहो सकलमाकुलं गोकुलम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Lord! After that, as Thou didst slightly kick Thy legs and raise infant cries, lying on the labour-bed of Nanda's wife, all the womenfolk were roused from sleep, and as they spread the news of the birth of a boy, the whole of Gokula was thrilled with waves of joy.

अहो खलु यशोदया नवकलाय-चेतोहरं
भवन्त-मलमन्तिके प्रथममापिबन्त्या दृशा ।
पुनः स्तनभरं निजं सपदि पाययन्त्या मुदा
मनोहर-तनुस्पृशा जगति पुण्यवन्तो जिताः ॥ 9 ॥

9. O wonder of wonders! All the meritorious and holy persons were surpassed by Yasoda, as she first imbibed with her eyes Thy form lying by her side like a fresh bud of Kalaya flower, next as she joyously applied Thee to her breast, and afterwards as she caressed Thy most lovely limbs again and again with her hands.

भवत्कुशलकाम्यया स खलु नन्दगोपस्तदा
प्रमोदभरसङ्कुलो द्विजकुलाय किन्नाददात् ।
तथैव पशुपालकाः किमु न मङ्गलं तेनिरे
जगत्त्रितयमङ्गल त्वमिह पाहि मामामयात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Limitless were the gifts the overjoyed Nanda distributed among holy men for Thy welfare. Numerous, too, were the auspicious rites and observances that the Gopas performed for Thy sake. O harbinger of world's welfare! Deign to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 40

SALVATION OF PUTANA

तदनु नन्द-ममन्दशुभास्पदं नृपपुरीं करदानकृते गतम् ।
समवलोक्य जगाद भवत्पिता विदितकंस-सहायजनोद्यमः ॥ 1 ॥

1. Shortly after, when the highly blessed Nanda went to the city of Kamsa to pay his tribute, Thy father, who had come to know of the activities of Kamsa's allies, happened to meet him and tell him as follows:

अयि सखे तव बालकजन्म मां सुखयतेऽद्य निजात्मजजन्मवत् ।
इति भवत्पितृतां व्रजनायके समधिरोप्य शशंस तमादरात् ॥ 2 ॥

2. 'O friend! The birth of a son to you delights me as if a son were born to myself'. Thus did he gracefully praise the chief of herdsmen, attributing to him Thy parentage (which really belonged to himself).

इह च सन्त्यनिमित्तशतानि ते कटकसीम्नि ततो लघु गम्यताम् ।
इति च तद्वचसा व्रजनायको भवदपायभिया द्रुतमाययौ ॥ 3 ॥

3. 'Many omens foreboding evil are being observed at your residence now. So hasten back to Gokula.' Warned in this manner by Vasudeva, Nanda returned home quickly, apprehending danger to Thee.

अवसरे खलु तत्र च काचन व्रजपदे मधुराकृतिरङ्गना ।
तरल-षट्पद-लालित-कुन्तला कपटपोतक ते निकटं गता ॥ 4 ॥

4. By that time, a very beautiful woman, with honey-bees hovering about the sweet-smelling flowers in her locks, entered Gokula, and approached Thee, who had assumed the form of a child by Thy Maya.

सपदि सा हृतबालकचेतना निशिचरान्वयजा किल पूतना ।
व्रजवधूष्विह केयमिति क्षणं विमृशतीषु भवन्तमुपाददे ॥ 5 ॥

5. A ruthless demoness given to infanticide, Putana (disguised as a handsome woman) took Thee up quickly in her hands, even as the women of Gokula were wondering who the newcomer might be.

ललित-भावविलास-हृतात्मभि-र्युवतिभिः प्रतिरोद्धु-मपारिता ।
स्तनमसौ भवनान्तनिषेदुषी प्रददुषी भवते कपटात्मने ॥ 6 ॥

6. The young women there, deceived by her show of charming manners and lovely movements, failed to check her advances, and so she took her seat in the house, and applied Thee, the illusive infant, to her breasts.

समधिरुह्य तदङ्कमशङ्कित-स्त्वमथ बालक-लोपन-रोषितः ।
महदिवाम्रफलं कुचमण्डलं प्रतिचुचूषिथ दुर्विषदूषितम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Thou, who wert angry at the slaughter of countless infants, didst lie in her lap unhesitatingly and begin to suck her poisoned breast, as if it were a huge mango fruit, with all force and enthusiasm.

असुभिरेव समं धयति त्वयि स्तनमसौ स्तनितोपम-निस्वना ।
निरपतद्भयदायि निजं वपुः प्रतिगता प्रविसार्य भुजावुभौ ॥ 8 ॥

8. As Thou didst begin to draw out even her vital energy while sucking her breast, she howled like a peal of thunder and fell down arms outstretched in her natural hideous and monstrous form.

भयद-घोषण-भीषण-विग्रह-श्रवण-दर्शन-मोहित-वल्लवे ।
व्रजपदे तदुरःस्थलखेलनं ननु भवन्त-मगृह्णत गोपिकाः ॥ 9 ॥

9. As the whole of Gokula stood stunned on hearing the terrific howl and seeing the frightful form, some Gopikas picked up Thee who wert sporting on the breast of the dead demoness.

भुवनमङ्गल-नामभिरेव ते युवतिभि-र्बहुधा कृतरक्षणः ।
त्वमयि वातनिकेतननाथ मा-मगदयन् कुरु तावकसेवकम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou whose world-saving Names were used by the young Gopikas to make a protective talisman for Thyself—mayest Thou be pleased to cure me of my ailments and make me the best of Thy devotees!

CANTO 41

CREMATION OF PUTANA

व्रजेश्वरः शौरिवचो निशम्य समाव्रज-न्नध्वनि भीतचेताः ।
निष्पिष्ट-निश्शेषतरुं निरीक्ष्य कञ्चित्पदार्थं शरणं गतस्त्वाम् ।। 1 ।।

1. As Nanda, the chieftain of Vraja, was hurrying back home, anxious on account of the warning words of Vasudeva, he came across a terrific form that had fallen after pulverising most of the trees in the neighbourhood—a sight which drove him to take shelter in Thee (in utter fear).

निशम्य गोपीवचना-दुदन्तं सर्वेऽपि गोपा भयविस्मयान्धाः ।
त्वत्पातितं घोरपिशाचदेहं देहुर्विदूरेऽथ कुठारकृत्तम् ।। 2 ।।

2. Learning from the womenfolk the whole story of Putana, the cowherds were struck with both fear and wonder. They then proceeded to cut into pieces and burn at a distance the body of the terrible monster felled by Thee.

त्वत्पीत-पूतस्तन-तच्छरीरात् समुच्चल-न्नुच्चतरो हि धूमः ।
शङ्का-मधादागरवः किमेष किं चान्दनो गौग्गुलवोऽथवेति ।। 3 ।।

3. Out of the burning body of the demoness, which had been purified by Thy sucking her breast, there rose up in the sky huge volumes of smoke so fragrant that people began to doubt whether it was sandal wood or frankincense that was being burnt.

मदङ्गसङ्गस्य फलन्नदूरे क्षणेन तावत् भवतामपि स्यात् ।
इत्युल्लपन् वल्लवतल्लजेभ्य-स्त्वं पूतनामातनुथाः सुगन्धिम् ।। 4 ।।

4. It looked as if in making Putana's body fragrant, Thou wert broadcasting to the wise among the Gopas (cowherds) that the fruits of Thy contact were not far off but would come to them quickly.

चित्रं पिशाच्या न हतः कुमार-श्चित्रं पुरैवाकथि शौरिणेदम् ।
इति प्रशंसन् किल गोपलोको भवन्मुखालोकरसे न्यमाङ्क्षीत् ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'It is a wonder that the child has not been killed by the demoness. It is a wonder too that this event has been foretold by Vasudeva.' With such words of praise, the Gopas stood immersed in the joy of looking at Thy face.

दिने दिनेऽथ प्रतिवृद्धलक्ष्मी-रक्षीणमाङ्गल्यशतो व्रजोऽयम् ।
भवन्निवासादयि वासुदेव प्रमोदसान्द्रः परितो विरेजे ॥ 6 ॥

6. O Vasudeva! On account of Thy presence there, the cowherd settlement of Nanda grew prosperous day by day and became a centre of great joy and undecaying virtue!

गृहेषु ते कोमलरूपहास-मिथःकथा-संङ्कुलिताः कमन्यः ।
वृत्तेषु कृत्येषु भवन्निरीक्षा-समागताः प्रत्यहमत्यनन्दन् ॥ 7 ॥

7. The young women of Vraja, while at home, exchanged notes about the beauty of Thy form and Thy smile; and the moment their household duties were over, they hurried to gather round Thee in great joy.

अहो कुमारो मयि दत्तदृष्टिः स्मितं कृतं मां प्रति वत्सकेन ।
एह्येहि मामित्युपसार्य पाणिं त्वयीश किं किं न कृतं वधूभिः ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Ah! The baby looks at me. His smile is directed to me. Come to me, O darling!' Chattering thus and stretching out their hands towards Thee, O Lord of all, in what all ways did they not caress Thee endearingly!

भवद्वपुःस्पर्शनकौतुकेन करात्करं गोपवधूजनेन ।
नीतस्त्वमातात्रसरोजमाला-व्यालम्बि-लोलम्बतुला-मलासीः ॥9 ॥

9. As they passed Thee from hand to hand in their eagerness to fondle Thee, Thou didst look like a honey beetle moving from one flower to another in a garland of red lotus flowers.

निपाययन्ती स्तनमङ्कगं त्वां विलोकयन्ती वदनं हसन्ती ।
दशां यशोदा कतमान्न भेजे स तादृशः पाहि हरे गदान्माम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. What states of joy did Yasoda, Nanda's wife, not attain to as she took Thee in her lap and suckled Thee, with her eyes fixed on thy smiling face! O Lord Hari of such excellences, deign to cure me of my illness!

CANTO 42

DESTRUCTION OF THE CART-WHEEL ASURA

कदापि जन्मर्क्षदिने तव प्रभो निमन्त्रितज्ञाति-वधू-महीसुरा ।
महानसस्त्वां सविधे निधाय सा महानसादौ ववृते व्रजेश्वरी ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Once on Thy birthday, the queen of Nanda, who had invited relatives, ladies and holy men (for the birthday feast), laid Thee near a big cart and was busy in the kitchen (preparing food for the reception of the guests).

ततो भवत्त्राण-नियुक्तबालक-प्रभीति-संक्रन्दन-सङ्कुलारवैः ।
विमिश्रमश्रावि भवत्समीपतः परिस्फुटद्दारु-चटच्चटारवः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Sometime after were heard the loud and frightened cries of the boys deputed for Thy protection, mingled with the crackling sound of wood smashed to smithereens.

ततस्तदाकर्णन-सम्भ्रमश्रम-प्रकम्पि-वक्षोजभरा व्रजाङ्गनाः ।
भवन्तमन्तर्ददृशुः समन्ततो विनिष्पतद्दारुणदारु-मध्यगम् ॥

3. Frightened by the sounds, the women of Vraja came running with their breasts heaving out of excitement and

exertion, and saw Thee lying in the midst of a frightful heap of crashed pieces of wood.

शिशोरहो किं किमभूदिति द्रुतं प्रधाव्य नन्दः पशुपाश्च भूसुराः ।
भवन्तमालोक्य यशोदया धृतं समाश्वस-न्नश्रुजलार्द्रलोचनाः ॥ 8 ॥

4. 'Alas! What has happened to the baby! What has happened to him!' Crying thus, Nanda, the Gopas and the assembled Brahmanas rushed to the spot, and, finding Thee in Yasoda's arms, felt relieved and shed tears of joy.

कस्को नु कौतस्कुत एष विस्मयो विशङ्कटं यच्छकटं विपाटितम् ।
न कारणं किञ्चिदिहेति ते स्थिताः स्वनासिका-दत्तकरा-स्त्वदीक्षकाः ॥

5. 'What wonder is this! How could this have happened—a huge cart lies here shattered to pieces! We find no explanation!' Exclaiming thus, they looked at Thee in astonishment, with their fingers on their noses.

कुमारकस्यास्य पयोधरार्थिनः प्ररोदने लोलपदाम्बुजाहतम्
मया मया दृष्टमनो विपर्यगा-दितीश ते पालकबालका जगुः ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'This baby, hungry for milk, began to cry, kicking up its legs, and while so doing, this cart was overturned by his tender legs. We saw it! We saw! Did'nt we?' Thus, O Lord, did the boys in attendance on Thee declare.

भिया तदा किञ्चिदजानतामिदं कुमारकाणा-मतिदुर्घटं वचः ।
भवत्प्रभावाविदुरै-रितीरितं मनागिवाशङ्कयत दृष्टपूतनैः ॥ 7 ॥

7. The people assembled, who knew nothing of Thy superhuman prowess, felt the words of these boys, who were dazed with fright, as inconsistent and unacceptable. But for those of them who had witnessed the Putana incident, it was not altogether unbelievable.

प्रवालताम्रं किमिदं पदं क्षतं सरोजरम्यौ नु करौ विरोजितौ ॥
इति प्रसर्पत्करुणातरङ्गिता-स्त्वदङ्गमापस्पृशु-रङ्गनाजनाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Have these legs, pink like tender leaves, been bruised? Have these lotus-like arms been fractured?' With such enquiries and agitated movements caused by excessive sympathy, the women of Vraja began to stroke Thy body gently.

अये सुतं देहि जगत्पतेः कृपा-तरङ्गपातात्परिपातमद्य मे ।
इति स्म सङ्गृह्य पिता त्वदङ्गकं मुहुर्मुहुः श्लिष्यति जातकण्टकः ॥ 9

9. 'Verily, the Lord's grace alone saved my darling! Hand him over to me,' so saying, Nanda, Thy father, took Thee up in his arms and embraced Thee again and again with his hairs standing on ends owing to excitement.

अनोनिलीनः किल हन्तुमागतः सुरारिरेवं भवता विहिंसितः ।
रजोऽपि नो दृष्टममुष्य तत्कथं स शुद्धसत्त्वे त्वयि लीनवान् ध्रुवम् ॥10॥

10. The demon who came disguised as a cart to kill Thee was thus destroyed by Thee. Not even a trace of his Rajas (meaning both his 'evil nature' and 'particles of the body') was to be seen anywhere there. How could this be unless the whole of his being was dissolved in Thee who art of pure Sattva (*i.e.* unless he attained to complete purification and absorption in Thee)?

प्रपूजितैस्तत्र ततो द्विजातिभि-र्विशेषतो लम्भितमङ्गलाशिषः ।
व्रजं निजैर्बाल्यरसै-र्विमोहयन् मरुत्पुराधीश रुजां जहीहि मे ॥ 11 ॥

11. Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, for whose welfare and protection, Brahmanas, invited specially and received with honour, then performed auspicious rites and ceremonies, and who delighted the whole of Vraja by the sweetness of Thy childish plays—mayest Thou deign to relieve me of the tortures of this ailment!

CANTO 43

DESTRUCTION OF TRINAVARTA

त्वामेकदा गुरुमरुत्पुरनाथ वोढुं गाढाधिरूढ-गरिमाण-मपारयन्ती ।
माता निधाय शयने किमिदं बतेति ध्यायन्त्यचेष्टत गृहेषु निविष्टशङ्का ।।

1. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Once Thy mother found Thee too weighty to hold, and therefore laid Thee on a bed. Then, with misgivings in her mind about this strange phenomenon, she engaged herself in household chores, meditating on Thee all the while.

तावद्विदूरमुपकर्णितघोरघोष-व्याजृम्भि-पांसुपटली-परिपूरिताशः ।
वात्यावपुः स किल दैत्यवरस्तृणावर्ताख्यो जहार जनमानसहारिणं त्वाम् ।।

2. A demon named Trinavarta, an ally of Kamsa disguised as a whirl-wind, whose approach was heralded even from a distance by a terrific noise and gusts of dust covering the quarters, *lifted* Thee who art capable of *lifting* the minds of all.

उद्दामपांसु-तिमिराहत-दृष्टिपाते द्रष्टुं किमप्यकुशले पशुपाललोके ।
हा बालकस्य किमिति त्वदुपान्तमाप्ता माता भवन्तमविलोक्य भृशं रुरोद ।।

3. While all the inhabitants of Gokula were caught in blinding darkness caused by clouds of dust and could see nothing round about, Thy mother rushed towards Thee in utter distress, but not finding Thee at the spot, began to weep and wail aloud.

तावत्स दानववरोऽपि च दीनमूर्ति-र्भावत्कभार-परिधारण-लूनवेगः ।
सङ्कोचमाप तदनु क्षतपांसुघोषे घोषे व्यतायत भवज्जननी-निनादः ।।

4. By that time, the demon chief had been weakened and gradually immobilised by Thy tremendous weight, and the dust and noise in the cowherd settlement had subsided, allowing Thy mother's cries and wailings to be heard far and near.

रोदोपकर्णनवशा-दुपगम्य गेहं क्रन्दत्सु नन्दमुखगोपकुलेषु दीनः ।
त्वां दानव-स्त्वखिलमुक्तिकरं मुमुक्षु-स्त्वय्यप्रमुञ्चति पपात वियत्प्रदेशात् ।।

5. Hearing these wailings, Nanda and other Gopas rushed inside the house, only to add their cries to those of Thy mother. Meanwhile the demon, being rendered weak and exhausted, attempted to *release* Thee who gives *release* to all; but Thou wouldst not, however, *release* him (from Thy hold), and he fell down from the skies.

रोदाकुलास्तदनु गोपगणा बहिष्ठ- पाषाणपृष्ठभुवि देहमतिस्थविष्ठम् ।
प्रैक्षन्त हन्त निपतन्तममुष्य वक्ष-स्यक्षीणमेव च भवन्तमलं हसन्तम् ।।

6. The community of Gopas, who were feeling exhausted by weeping and wailing, now saw a huge body falling on a rock outside the cowherd settlement, and on the chest of that dead body, they found Thee lying unhurt, with a soft smile playing on Thy lips.

ग्रावप्रपात-परिपिष्ट-गरिष्ठदेह-
भ्रष्टासु-दुष्टदनुजोपरि धृष्टहासम् ।
आघ्नानमम्बुजकरेण भवन्तमेत्य
गोपा दधुर्गिरिवरादिव नीलरत्नम् ।। 7 ।।

7. As an emerald from a mountain, the Gopas picked Thee up, smiling and vigorously exercising Thy infant limbs, from the wicked demon's huge carcass which was found completely smashed by its impact on the rock.

एकैकमाशु परिगृह्य निकामनन्द-
न्नन्दादि-गोपपरिरब्धविचुम्बिताङ्गम् ।
आदातुकाम-परिशङ्कित-गोपनारी-
हस्ताम्बुजप्रपतितं प्रणुमो भवन्तम् ।। 8 ।।

8. I bow down to Thee whom Nanda and other Gopas embraced and kissed in different parts of the body in their overwhelming joy at Thy recovery, and who (like a honey

beetle into lotuses) didst readily spring into the lovely lotus-like arms of each and everyone of the Gopis who extended them with a desire to take Thee up in them.

भूयोऽपि किन्नु कृणुमः प्रणतार्तिहारी
गोविन्द एव परिपालयतात् सुतं नः ।
इत्यादि मातरपितृप्रमुखै-स्तदानीं
सम्प्रार्थित-स्त्वदवनाय विभो त्वमेव ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'What measures of protection can we take in future! May Govinda, who removes the sorrows of all who surrender to Him, protect our child!' Thus, O Lord, did Thy parents and others pray to Thee for Thy own protection.

वातात्मकं दनुजमेवमयि प्रधून्वन्
वातोद्भवान् मम गदान् किमु नो धुनोषि ।
किं वा करोमि पुनरप्यनिलालयेश
निश्शेषरोगशमनं मुहुरर्थये त्वाम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Thou Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who didst thus destroy the demon who came as *wind*—why dost Thou not destroy my ailment born of *wind*? Having no other resort, I pray to Thee again and again for the eradication of all my ailments, internal and external.

CANTO 44

NAMING CEREMONY

गूढं वसुदेवगिरा कर्तुं ते निष्क्रियस्य संस्कारान् ।
हृद्गतहोरातत्त्वो गर्गमुनिस्त्वद्गृहं विभो गतवान् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O All pervading Being! At the request of Vasudeva, sage Garga, a master of the science of astrology, arrived at Thy house in order to perform in camera the birth ceremonies for Thee, who art above all ceremonies and rites as also of the movements of Prakriti.

नन्दोऽथ नन्दितात्मा वृन्दिष्टं मानयन्नमुं यमिनाम् ।
मन्दस्मितार्द्रमूचे त्वत्संस्कारान् विधातुमुत्सुकधीः ।। 2 ।।

2. 'Nanda, glad at the arrival of Garga, and very enthusiastic to have Thy birth ceremonies performed, received that leading sage with due honour and spoke to him with a smiling face and great gentleness.

यदुवंशाचार्यत्वात् सुनिभृत-मिदमार्य कार्यमिति कथयन् ।
गर्गो निर्गतपुलक-श्चक्रे तव साग्रजस्य नामानि ।। 3 ।।

3. 'Respected Nanda,' replied the sage, 'I am the priest of the Yadu clan. I have therefore to perform the ceremonies for your infant in secrecy (so that suspicion may not be aroused in the mind of Kamsa).' So saying, Garga gave names to Thee and Thy brother, moved by great devotional feeling that made his hair stand on end.

कथमस्य नाम कुर्वे सहस्रनाम्नो ह्यनन्तनाम्नो वा ।
इति नूनं गर्गमुनिश्चक्रे तव नाम रहसि विभो ।। 4 ।।

4. 'How can I give a name to one who has a thousand, nay, countless names!' thinking thus, it must be, that sage Garga performed Thy naming ceremony in secrecy.

कृषिधातुणकाराभ्यां सत्तानन्दात्मतां किलाभिलपत् ।
जगदघकर्षित्वं वा कथयदृषिः कृष्णनाम ते व्यतनोत् ।। 5 ।।

5. Garga gave Thee the name Krishna, meaning absolute existence and absolute bliss from its roots 'Krish' and the suffix 'n,' or signifying one who uproots the sins of the world.

अन्यांश्च नामभेदान् व्याकुर्वन्नग्रजे च रामादीन् ।
अतिमानुषानुभावं न्यगद-त्वामप्रकाशयन् पित्रे ।। 6 ।।

6. He gave Thee some other names also (like Vasudeva), and called Thy brother by the name Rama. Without revealing Thy identity fully to Thy father, he indicated Thee to be one with a superhuman nature.

स्निह्यति यस्तव पुत्रे मुह्यति स न मायिकैः पुनः शोकैः ।
द्रुह्यति यः स तु नश्ये-दित्यवदत्ते महत्वमृषिवर्यः ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'Whoever loves your child will not again be overcome by the sorrows caused by Maya (in the form of cycle of births and deaths), and whoever assails him, will come to destruction.' Thus did the great sage describe Thy greatness.

जेष्यति बहुतरदैत्यान् नेष्यति निजबन्धुलोक-ममलपदम् ।
श्रोष्यति सुविमलकीर्ती-रस्येति भवद्विभूति-मृषिरूचे ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'He will overcome many Asuras, and he will give salvation to those who attach themselves to him. You will have occasion to hear of the untainted fame of this son of yours.' Thus did the sage describe Thy greatness.

अमुनैव सर्वदुर्गं तरितास्थ कृतास्थमत्र तिष्ठध्वम् ।
हरिरेवेत्यनभिलप-न्नित्यादि त्वामवर्णयत् स मुनिः ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'With the help of this son, you will be able to overcome all difficulties. Have firm faith in him.' Thus, without explicitly stating that Thou wert Vishnu, the sage described Thy greatness.

गर्गेऽथ निर्गतेऽस्मिन् नन्दित-नन्दादि-नन्द्यमानस्त्वम् ।
मद्गद-मुद्गतकरुणो निर्गमय श्रीमरुत्पुराधीश ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who wert endearingly looked after by Nanda and others after the departure of Garga—may Thou, out of Thy overflowing mercy, eradicate my ailments!

CANTO 45

CHILDHOOD PRANKS OF KRISHNA

अयि सबल मुरारे पाणिजानुप्रचारैः
किमपि भवनभागान् भूषयन्तौ भवन्तौ ।
चलितचरणकञ्जौ मञ्जुमञ्जीरशिञ्जा-
श्रवणकुतुकभाजौ चेरतुश्चारु वेगात् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord Krishna! Thou with Thy brother Rama didst soon begin to move about in the house prettily on all fours, with attention riveted on the sweet tinkling sound of anklets, which swelled with the briskness of Thy movements.

मृदु मृदु विकसन्ता-वुन्मिषद्-दन्तवन्तौ
वदनपतितकेशौ दृश्यपादाब्जदेशौ ।
भुजगलितकरान्त-व्यालगत्-कङ्कणाङ्कौ
मतिमहरतमुच्चैः पश्यतां विश्वनृणाम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. With a pretty smile that revealed the newly cut teeth, with locks of hair streaming all over the face, with soles of feet lovely like lotus flowers, and with bangles slipping from the arms to the wrists, Thou along with Thy brother didst irresistibly captivate the minds of all onlookers (as Thou didst first move about on Thy knees and hands).

अनुसरति जनौघे कौतुकव्याकुलाक्षे
किमपि कृतनिनादं व्याहसन्तौ द्रवन्तौ ।
वलितवदनपद्मं पृष्ठतो दत्तदृष्टी
किमिव न विदधाथे कौतुकं वासुदेव ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Vasudeva! When the men of Vraja, with their looks excited with affection, approached from behind to catch Thee, Thou with Thy brother, first screaming and then bursting into laughter, didst move away from them swiftly and, from a distance, again turn Thy lotus face back to look at them, creating thrills of joy in the minds of all onlookers.

द्रुतगतिषु पतन्तावुत्थितौ लिप्तपङ्कौ
दिवि मुनिभिरपङ्कैः सस्मितं वन्द्यमानौ ।
द्रुतमथ जननीभ्यां सानुकम्पं गृहीतौ
मुहुरपि परिरब्धौ द्राग्युवां चुम्बितौ च ॥ 4 ॥

4. Moving very fast, both of you would now and then fall flat on the ground and get up *stained* with mud, while heavenly sages without any *stain* watched and smiled in a worshipful attitude. Soon would the mothers take you both up in their arms and embrace and kiss again and again.

स्नुतकुचभरमङ्के धारयन्ती भवन्तं
तरलमति यशोदा स्तन्यदा धन्यधन्या ।
कपटपशुप मध्ये मुग्धहासाङ्कुरं ते
दशनमुकुलहृद्य वीक्ष्य वक्त्रं जहर्ष ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Thou in the assumed form of a cowherd child! How fortunate indeed was Thy mother, the tender-hearted Yasoda, to have been filled with joy as she watched Thy face, lit up by a bewitching smile that revealed an attractive jasmine-like row of teeth, while she suckled Thee lying in her lap!

तदनु चरणचारी दारकैः साकमारा-
न्निलयततिषु खेलन् बालचापल्यशाली ।
भवनशुकबिडालान् वत्सकांश्चानुधावन्
कथमपि कृतहासै-र्गोपकै-र्वारितोऽभूः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Next, as Thou didst begin to walk about, Thou, accompanied by other boys, wert seen playing with childish restlessness in the neighbouring compounds, chasing domestic pets like cats, parrots and calves, while the Gopas, witnessing all this in great joy, somehow restrained Thee from such pranks.

हलधरसहितस्त्वं यत्र यत्रोपयातो
विवशपतितनेत्रा-स्तत्र तत्रैव गोप्यः ।

विगलितगृहकृत्या विस्मृतापत्यभृत्या
मुरहर मुहुरत्यन्ताकुला नित्यमासन् ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Destroyer of Mura! Wherever Thou didst go with Rama, there the Gopis stood continuously gazing at Thee with looks excited and fascinated to the utter neglect of their household duties and in total forgetfulness of their own children and servants.

प्रतिनवनवनीतं गोपिकादत्तमिच्छन्
कलपदमुपगायन् कोमलं क्वापि नृत्यन् ।
सदययुवतिलोकै-रर्पितं सर्पिरश्नन्
क्वचन नवविपक्वं दुग्धमप्यापिबस्त्वम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Desirous of fresh butter from the Gopis, Thou, wouldst go about, now singing sweetly, now dancing enchantingly, whereupon the Gopis, with minds full of tender feelings, would offer Thee butter, and sometimes freshly boiled milk too, which Thou wouldst consume with delight.

मम खलु बलिगेहे याचनं जातमास्ता-
मिह पुनरबलाना-मग्रतो नैव कुर्वे ।
इति विहितमतिः किं देव सन्त्यज्य याच्ञां
दधिघृतमहरस्त्वं चारुणा चोरणेन ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'In the court of King Mahabali, I had to beg. That was humiliation, indeed! Now from these womenfolk at least, I shall not beg. Was it resolving thus, that Thou O Lord! didst give up asking for milk and curds, and take to stealing them through all kinds of delightful tricks?

तव दधिघृतमोषे घोषयोषा-जनाना-
मभजत हृदि रोषो नावकाशं न शोकः ।
हृदयमपि मुषित्वा हर्षसिन्धौ न्यधास्त्वं
स मम शमय रोगान् वातगेहाधिनाथ ॥ 10 ॥

10. The Gopis did not feel the least annoyance or sorrow at Thy *stealing* curds and butter. For Thou didst simultaneously *steal* their hearts too and immerse them in a sea of joy. May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to eradicate my sufferings!

CANTO 46

REVELATION OF THE COSMIC FORM

अयि देव पुरा किल त्वयि स्वयमुत्तानशये स्तनन्धये ।
परिजृम्भणतो व्यपावृते वदने विश्वमचष्ट वल्लवी ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Once while sucking Thy mother's breast, Thou, lying flat on her lap, didst yawn and reveal the whole universe to her in Thy mouth.

पुनरप्यथ बालकैः समं त्वयि लीलानिरते जगत्पते ।
फलसञ्चय-वञ्चनक्रुधा तव मृद्भोजन-मूचुरर्भकाः ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Lord of all the worlds! Sometime after, whilst at play with other boys, Thou didst steal away some fruits collected by them, and being angry at this, they concocted the story that Thou hadst eaten mud.

अयि ते प्रलयावधौ विभो क्षितितोयादि-समस्तभक्षिणः ।
मृदुपाशनतो रुजा भवे-दिति भीता जननी चुकोप सा ॥ 3 ॥

3. O All-pervading Being! Thou art accustomed to consume even all the cosmic elements like earth, water and the rest at the time of cosmic dissolution. But lo! Thy mother (ignorant of this) was very much frightened that Thou wouldst fall ill by eating a little mud, and got angry with Thee!

अयि दुर्विनयात्मक त्वया किमु मृत्सा बत वत्स भक्षिता ।
इति मातृगिरं चिरं विभो वितथां त्वं प्रतिजज्ञिषे हसन् ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'O naughty boy, did you eat mud?' Hearing these words of Thy mother, Thou didst several times deny the charge emphatically, laughing all the while.

अयि ते सकलैर्विनिश्चिते विमतिश्चेद्वदनं विदार्यताम् ।
इति मातृविभर्त्सितो मुखं विकसत्पद्मनिभं व्यदारयः ।। 5 ।।

5. 'My boy, if you dare really deny this charge which all the boys bring against you, then open your mouth." Challenged in this way by Thy mother, Thou didst open Thy mouth even as a lotus flower unfolds its petals.

अपि मृल्लवदर्शनोत्सुकां जननीं तां बहु तर्पयन्निव ।
पृथिवीं निखिलां न केवलं भुवनान्य-प्यखिला-न्यदीदृशः ।। 6 ।।

6. To Thy mother who wanted to see whether there was even a trace of mud in Thy mouth, Thou didst, as if to give her abundant satisfaction, reveal therein not only the whole of this sphere called the earth but the entire universe.

कुहचिद्वनमम्बुधिः क्वचित् क्वचिदभ्रं कुहचिद्रसातलम् ।
मनुजा दनुजाः क्वचित्सुरा ददृशे किन्न तदा त्वदानने ।। 7 ।।

7. Forests, oceans, empty space as also other spheres like Rasatala; men, demons and the gods—all these and everything else that exists, she perceived in Thy mouth.

कलशाम्बुधिशायिनं पुनः परवैकुण्ठपदाधिवासिनम् ।
स्वपुरश्च निजार्भकात्मकं कतिधा त्वां न ददर्श सा मुखे ।। 8 ।।

8. She saw Thee also therein—now as the Purusha lying in the ocean of milk, next as Mahavishnu manifest in the Supreme Abode of Vaikuntha, and again as her child standing before her. Indeed, numberless were the forms in which she had Thy vision!

विकसद्भुवने मुखोदरे ननु भूयोऽपि तथाविधाननः ।
अनया स्फुटमीक्षितो भवा-ननवस्थां जगतां बतातनोत् ।। 9 ।।

9. When all the worlds were seen in the cavity of Thy mouth, Thou didst reveal therein another face and mouth

with all the worlds therein too, and still another within it, and so on endlessly (thus revealing the infinitude of Thy creation).

धृततत्त्वधियं तदा क्षणं जननीं तां प्रणयेन मोहयन् ।
स्तनमम्ब दिशेत्युपासजन् भगवन्नद्भुतबाल पाहि माम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Yasoda had just then a flash of illumination, but Thou, in order to retain in her the sense of worldly relationship through the enchantment of Thy love, clung to her, calling her 'Mother', and demanding to be suckled. May Thou, O Wondrous Child, deign to protect me!

CANTO 47

BOUND TO THE MORTAR

एकदा दधिविमाथकारिणीं मातरं समुपसेदिवान् भवान् ।
स्तन्यलोलुपतया निवारय-न्नङ्कमेत्य पपिवान् पयोधरौ ॥ 1 ॥

1. Once while Thy mother was churning curds, Thou, in Thy eagerness to be fed, obstructed her work, getting up on her lap and sucking her breast.

अर्धपीत-कुचकुड्मले त्वयि स्निग्धहास-मधुराननाम्बुजे ।
दुग्धमीश दहने परिस्रुतं धर्तुमाशु जननी जगाम ते ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Lord! When Thou, with Thy lotus face rendered sweet by its charming smile, hadst but half sucked her bud-like breasts, Thy mother had to go in haste to attend to the milk overflowing on the hearth.

सामिपीत-रसभङ्गसङ्गत-क्रोधभार-परिभूत-चेतसा ।
मन्थदण्डमुपगृह्य पाटितं हन्त देव दधिभाजनं त्वया ॥ 3 ॥

3. Lord, enraged at this interruption of Thy feed in the middle, Thou didst break the curd pot with a stroke of the churning rod.

उच्चलद्ध्वनित-मुच्चकैस्तदा सन्निशम्य जननी समाद्रुता ।
त्वद्यशोविसरवत् ददर्श सा सद्य एव दधि विस्तृतं क्षितौ ॥ 4 ॥

4. Hearing the loud sound of the cracking pot, Thy mother came running to the spot, only to see the curd spread all over the ground, even like Thy pure-white fame all over the universe.

वेदमार्ग-परिमार्गितं रुषा त्वामवीक्ष्य परिमार्गयन्त्यसौ ।
सन्ददर्श सुकृति-न्युलूखले दीयमान-नवनीतमोतवे ॥ 5 ॥

5. Not finding Thee at the spot—Thee whom aspirants seek through the paths laid down by the Vedas—the enraged Yasoda searched everywhere, until the fortunate lady found Thee sitting on a wooden mortar in the act of giving butter to a cat.

त्वां प्रगृह्य बत भीतिभावना-भासुरानन-सरोजमाशु सा ।
रोषरोषितमुखी सखीपुरो बन्धनाय रशनामुपाददे ॥ 6 ॥

6. She now caught hold of Thee, whose countenance looked strikingly beautiful on account of the assumed expression of fear, and with her face quivering with anger, took a rope to bind Thee, as the other women, her companions, looked on. O, the stupidity of it! To think of *binding* Thee who releasest the *bondages* of all!

बन्धुमिच्छति यमेव सज्जन-स्तं भवन्तमयि बन्धुमिच्छति ।
सा नियुज्य रशनागुणान् बहून् द्व्यङ्गुलोनमखिलं किलैक्षत ॥ 7 ॥

7. She now joined together several pieces of strings to *bind* Thee, to whom all good men *bind* themselves in devotion, and lo! she found the rope two inches short, however much she lengthened it with new attachments!

विस्मितोत्स्मित-सखीजनेक्षितां स्विन्नसन्नवपुषं निरीक्ष्य ताम्
नित्यमुक्तवपुरप्यहो हरे बन्धमेव कृपयान्वमन्यथाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. As the friends of Thy mother witnessed this sight with a smile of astonishment, Thou didst find her exhausted and

perspiring, and lo! out of pity for her, Thou, O Hari, who art the Ever-free Being, didst allow Thyself to be bound to the wooden mortar.

स्थीयतां चिरमुलूखले खले-त्यागता भवनमेव सा यदा ।
प्रागुलूखल-बिलान्तरे तदा सर्पिरर्पितमदन्नवास्थिथाः ॥ ९ ॥

9. 'You rogue of a fellow! Remain thus tied to the mortar for a while!' So saying, Thy mother went into the house, while Thou, for Thy part, didst start eating the butter that had already been stored by Thee in the cavity of the mortar.

यद्यपाशसुगमो विभो भवान् संयतः किमु सपाशयानया ।
एवमादि दिविजैरभिष्टुतो वातनाथ परिपाहि मां गदात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'O All-pervading Being! If Thou art easy of attainment only by those without *Pasa*, the binding cords of desire, how has Yasoda with a *Pasa* (rope for binding) been able to secure Thee!' O Lord of Guruvayoor, Thou whose glory was thus praised by the gods in heaven, may Thou be pleased to cure me of my ailments!

CANTO 48

RELEASE OF NALA-KUBARA AND MANIGRIVA

मुदा सुरौघै-स्त्वमुदारसम्मदै-रुदीर्य दामोदर इत्यभिष्टुतः ।
मृदूदरः स्वैरमुलूखले लगन्-नदूरतो द्वौ ककुभा-वुदैक्षथाः ॥ 1 ॥

1. As the gods in exuberant joy hailed Thee as 'Damodara' (one with a cord round the waist), Thou, whose tender belly was tightly tied to the mortar, didst see close by a pair of trees of the Kakubha species.

कुबेरसूनु-र्नलकूबराभिधः परो मणिग्रीव इति प्रथां गतः ।
महेशसेवाधिगत-श्रियोन्मदौ चिरं किल त्वद्विमुखा-वखेलताम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Two sons of Kubera, one known as Nalakubara and the other famed as Manigriva, had once attained to great prosperity through the worship of Siva and, infatuated with pride of wealth, they lived a life of utter sensuality in complete forgetfulness of Thee.

सुरापगायां किल तौ मदोत्कटौ सुरापगायद्बहु-यौवतावृतौ ।
विवाससौ केलिपरौ स नारदो भवत्पदैकप्रवणो निरैक्षत ॥ 3 ॥

3. Sage Narada, famous for his deep devotion to Thee, happened to meet these two in a state of intoxication, surrounded by young damsels singing under the influence of liquor, and indulging stark naked in water sports in the sacred Ganges.

भिया प्रियालोकमुपात्तवाससं पुरो निरीक्ष्यापि मदान्धचेतसौ ।
इमौ भवद्भक्त्युपशान्तिसिद्धये मुनिर्जगौ शान्तिमृते कुतः सुखम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. At the approach of the sage, the women, out of fear and respect, put on their robes, but these two, despite their example, continued to sport in nakedness, oblivious, as they were, of all sense of propriety owing to intoxication. So the sage, in order that they might have devotion to Thee and peace of mind thereby, pronounced a curse on them. For, how can there be happiness without peace of mind?

युवामवाप्तौ ककुभात्मतां चिरं हरिं निरीक्ष्याथ पदं स्वमाप्नुतम् ।
इतीरितौ तौ भवदीक्षणस्पृहां गतौ व्रजान्ते ककुभौ बभूवतुः ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'You shall become Kakubha trees for a long period, and afterwards, when you contact Hari at the time He incarnates, you shall be restored to your old state.' Being thus cursed by the sage, they became the two Kakubha trees of Vraja and awaited there in eagerness to see Thee.

अतन्द्रमिन्द्रद्रुयुगं तथाविधं समेयुषा मन्थरगामिना त्वया ।
तिरायितोलूखल-रोधनिर्धुतौ चिराय जीर्णौ परिपातितौ तरू ॥ 6 ॥

6. To these two trees didst Thou move slowly (in spite of being tied to the mortar), and on Thy pulling that wooden

mortar crosswise between these two old and decaying trees, they shook violently and fell down.

अभाजि शाखिद्वितयं यदा त्वया तदैव तद्गर्भतलान्-निरेयुषा ।
महात्विषा यक्षयुगेन तत्क्षणा-दभाजि गोविन्द भवानपि स्तवैः ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Govinda! As soon as Thou didst fell the two trees, there emerged from their core two Yakshas of great radiance, who immediately greeted Thee with a hymn.

इहान्यभक्तोऽपि समेष्यति क्रमाद्-भवन्तमेतौ खलु रुद्रसेवकौ ।
मुनिप्रसादाद्-भवदङ्घ्रिमागतौ गतौ वृणानौ खलु भक्तिमुत्तमाम् ॥

8. In this world even those devoted to other gods ultimately come to Thee. In the case of these two votaries of Rudra, they were led by sage Narada's grace to Thy feet, and now they departed to their realm after praying for devotion to Thee for a boon.

ततस्तरूद्दारण-दारुणारव-प्रकम्पिसम्पातिनि गोपमण्डले ।
विलज्जित-त्वज्जननी-मुखेक्षिणा व्यमोक्षि नन्देन भवान् विमोक्षदः ॥

9. Hearing the terrific sound caused by the falling trees, the whole community of Gopas came running to the spot. Then Thy father Nanda, who cast a meaningful glance at the repentant face of Thy mother, *released* Thee, who *releasest* all from the bonds of Samsara.

महीरुहोर्मध्यगतो बतार्भको हरेः प्रभावा-दपरिक्षतोऽधुना ।
इति ब्रुवाणैर्गमितो गृहं भवान् मरुत्पुराधीश्वर पाहि मां गदात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'The Lord's grace alone has saved the child who was entangled between the falling trees!' remarked the Gopas. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who wert carried into the house by them with such words, be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 49

TREK TO VRINDAVANA

भवत्प्रभावाविदुरा हि गोपा-स्तरुप्रपातादिकमत्र गोष्ठे ।
अहेतुमुत्पातगणं विशङ्क्य प्रयातुमन्यत्र मनो वितेनुः ॥ 1 ॥

1. The Gopas, who were unaware of Thy greatness, interpreted such occurrences as the falling of the trees as unaccountable ill-omens and decided to migrate to another place.

तत्रोपनन्दाभिध-गोपवर्यो जगौ भवत्प्रेरणयैव नूनम् ।
इतः प्रतीच्यां विपिनं मनोज्ञं वृन्दावनं नाम विराजतीति ॥ 2 ॥

2. Indeed! It was by Thy prompting that a leading Gopa named Upananda directed their attention to a beautiful wooded country to the west called Vrindavana (as a better location for their cowherd settlement).

बृहद्वनं तत्खलु नन्दमुख्या विधाय गौष्ठीनमथ क्षणेन ।
त्वदन्वित-त्वज्जननीनिविष्ट-गरिष्ठयानानुगता विचेलुः ॥ 3 ॥

3. Abandoning soon the old site of Brihadvana, Nanda and the Gopas started in their carts led by an imposing vehicle carrying Thee and Thy mother.

अनोमनोज्ञध्वनि-धेनुपाली-खुरप्रणादान्तरतो वधूभिः ।
भवद्विनोदा-लपिताक्षराणि प्रपीय नाज्ञायत मार्गदैर्घ्यम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. The cowherd women did not feel the distance the party covered, as their attention was riveted upon Thy playful talks amidst the delightful sound of the carts mingled with that of the tramplings of herds of cattle.

निरीक्ष्य वृन्दावनमीश नन्द-त्प्रसूनकुन्दप्रमुख-द्रुमौघम् ।
अमोदथाः शाद्वलसान्द्रलक्ष्म्या हरिन्मणी-कुट्टिम-पुष्टशोभम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord! Thou wert delighted to see the beauty of Vrindavana with its flowering Kunda trees and its expansive grass lands that resembled pavements of emerald.

नवाकनिर्व्यूढ-निवासभेदे-ष्वशेषगोपेषु सुखासितेषु ।
वनश्रियं गोपकिशोरपाली-विमिश्रितः पर्यवलोकथास्त्वम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. After the Gopas had built new houses and settled down comfortably, Thou didst go round Vrindavana with the Gopa boys, enjoying the beauty of the place.

अरालमार्गागत-निर्मलापां मरालकूजाकृत-नर्मलापाम् ।
निरन्तरस्मेर-सरोजवक्त्रां कलिन्दकन्यां समलोकयस्त्वम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Thou didst enjoy the sight of the daughter of Kalinda (river Kalindi or Yamuna) with winding water channels for her curly hair, with the sweet cooings of swans for her delightful chatter, and with the thick growth of full-blown lotuses for her ever-smiling face.

मयूरकेकाशत-लोभनीयं मयूखमाला-शबलं मणीनाम् ।
विरिञ्चलोकस्पृश-मुच्चशृङ्गै-र्गिरिं च गोवर्धन-मैक्षथास्त्वम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Thou didst also see the mountain Govardhana, resonant with the musical call of peacocks, radiant with varied hues emanating from the gems it contained, and impressive with its peaks touching, as it were, the Satyaloka itself.

समं ततो गोपकुमारकैस्त्वं समन्ततो यत्र वनान्तमागाः ।
ततस्ततस्तां कुटिलामपश्यः कलिन्दजां रागवती-मिवैकाम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Wherever Thou didst roam in the woods with the Gopa boys, Thou didst come across the winding course of the Kalindi, the daughter of Kalinda, as if she were a love-lorn damsel awaiting Thy arrival in solitude.

तथाविधेऽस्मिन् विपिने पशव्ये समुत्सुको वत्सगणप्रचारे ।
चरन् सरामोऽथ कुमारकैस्त्वं समीरगेहाधिप पाहि रोगात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who, along with Rama and the boys, didst wander in that pastoral woodland tending calves with great joy—may Thou be pleased to save me from my illness.

CANTO 50

CALF-DEMON AND STORK-DEMON

तरलमधुकृद्वृन्दे वृन्दावनेऽथ मनोहरे
पशुपशिशुभिः साकं वत्सानुपालनलोलुपः ।
हलधरसखो देव श्रीमन्विचेरिथ धारयन्
गवलमुरलीवेत्रं नेत्राभिरामतनुद्युतिः ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord of Lakshmi! Engrossed in the work of tending calves, Thou didst range the beautiful woods of Vrindavana with its swarms of honey bees—attended by Rama and the cowherd boys, equipped with horn, flute and cane and charming all by the beauty of Thy form.

विहितजगतीरक्षं लक्ष्मीकराम्बुजलालितं
ददति चरणद्वन्द्वं वृन्दावने त्वयि पावने ।
किमिव न बभौ सम्पत्सम्पूरितं तरुवल्लरी-
सलिलधरणीगोत्र-क्षेत्रादिकं कमलापते ॥ 2 ॥

2. When the blessed land of Vrindavana got the touch of Thy feet—the feet that form the sole shelter of all the worlds and which the hands of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity, always shampoo—the trees, the creepers, the waters, the fallow lands, the cultivated fields and the hills of the place attained to excellences unseen before.

विलसदुलपे कान्तारान्ते समीरणशीतले
विपुलयमुनातीरे गोवर्धनाचलमूर्धसु ।
ललितमुरलीनादः सञ्चारयन् खलु वात्सकं
क्वचन दिवसे दैत्यं वत्साकृतिं त्वमुदैक्षथाः ॥ 3 ॥

3. Whilst Thou wert thus engaged in herding calves to the accompaniment of Thy flute, now in the grassy plains in the woods, next on the cool, breezy and extensive banks of the Yamuna, and again on the top of the Govardhana mountain, Thou didst notice one day an Asura in the disguise of a calf amidst Thy herd.

रभसविलसत्पुच्छं विच्छायतोऽस्य विलोकयन्
किमपि वलितस्कन्धं रन्ध्रप्रतीक्षमुदीक्षितम् ।
तमथ चरणे बिभ्र-द्विभ्रामयन् मुहुरुच्चकैः
कुहचन महावृक्षे चिक्षेपिथ क्षतजीवितम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. As the Asura in the disguise of a calf frisked about, now wagging the tail briskly, next looking back with neck turned as if watching for an opportune moment for mischief, Thou didst catch him by his hind leg, and whirling him about forcefully, hurl him dead on to the top of a big tree nearby.

निपतति महादैत्ये जात्या दुरात्मनि तत्क्षणं
निपतनजवक्षुण्ण-क्षोणीरुहक्षतकानने ।
दिवि परिमिलद्वृन्दा वृन्दारकाः कुसुमोत्करैः
शिरसि भवतो हर्षाद्वर्षन्ति नाम तदा हरे ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Hari! The Devas assembled in the heavens to shower heaps of flowers over Thy head, while the Asura fell down to the earth, thinning the forest by crashing and uprooting many trees by the velocity of his fall.

सुरभिलतमा मूर्धन्यूर्ध्वं कुतः कुसुमावली
निपतति तवेत्युक्तो बालैः सहेलमुदैरयः ।
झटिति दनुजक्षेपेणोर्ध्वं गतस्तरुमण्डलात्
कुसुमनिकरः सोऽयं नूनं समेति शनैरिति ॥ 6 ॥

6. To the cowherd boys who wondered how these fragrant flowers were falling on Thy head, Thou didst answer in fun that they surely marked the slow descent of flowers that went up from the thick growth of trees as the Asura's body was thrown against them.

क्वचन दिवसे भूयो भूयस्तरे परुषातपे
तपनतनयापाथः पातुं गता भवदादयः ।
चलितगरुतं प्रेक्षामासुर्बकं खलु विस्मृतं
क्षितिधरगरुच्छेदे कैलासमिवापरम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Another day, being parched in the heat of the sun, Thou with Thy companions didst resort to Yamuna's banks to quench Thy thirst. There Thou didst see a huge crane with flapping wings, which looked like another Kailasa mountain whom Indra missed while cutting the wings of mountains.

पिबति सलिलं गोपव्राते भवन्तमभिद्रुतः
स किल निगिलन्नग्निप्रख्यं पुनर्द्रुतमुद्वमन् ।
दलयितु-मगात् त्रोटयाः कोटया तदा तु भवान् विभो
खलजनभिदाचुञ्चु-श्चञ्चू प्रगृह्य ददार तम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. When all the cowherd boys were drinking water, the crane-demon rushed at Thee, and swallowed Thee up, but was forced to spit Thee out like a ball of fire. Then he tried to tear Thee with his beak, but Thou, who art noted for *tearing* up (destroying) evil ones, didst *tear* apart the two halves of his beak and destroy him.

सपदि सहजां सन्द्रष्टुं वा मृतां खलु पूतना-
मनुजमघमप्यग्रे गत्वा प्रतीक्षितुमेव वा ।
शमननिलयं याते तस्मिन् बके सुमनोगणे
किरति सुमनोवृन्दं वृन्दावनाद्गृहमैयथाः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Baka, the crane-demon, went to the abode of Death, as if to meet his sister Putana (who was already there), or to be ready in advance to receive his brother Agha (who was to follow him soon). As the crowd of Devas showered flowers (out of joy at the death of the cruel demon), Thou didst proceed from the woods of Vrindavana to Thy home.

ललितमुरलीनादं दूरान्निशम्य वधूजनै-
स्त्वरितमुपगम्यारा-दारूढमोदमुदीक्षितः ।
जनितजननीनन्दानन्दः समीरणमन्दिर-
प्रथितवसते शौरे दूरीकुरुष्व ममामयान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord Krishna, who residest in this famous Temple of Guruvayoor! Thou on whose return, heralded from a distance by the sweet sound of the flute, the womenfolk of Vraja rushed in great joy and haste to have a glimpse, and who didst impart great delight to Thy parents Yasoda and Nanda—may Thou be pleased to drive away my ailments!

CANTO 51

DESTRUCTION OF AGHASURA

कदाचन व्रजशिशुभिः समं भवान् वनाशने विहितमतिः प्रगेतराम् ।
समावृतो बहुतरवत्समण्डलैः सतेमनैर्निरगमदीश जेमनैः ॥ 1 ॥

1. Accompanied by the boys of Vraja and surrounded by a large herd of calves, Thou didst once leave home very early in the morning for a picnic in the woods, well furnished with cooked rice, condiments, curds, butter milk and such other viands.

विनिर्यतस्तव चरणाम्बुजद्वया-दुदञ्चितं त्रिभुवनपावनं रजः ।
महर्षयः पुलकधरैः कलेबरै-रुदूहिरे धृतभवदीक्षणोत्सवाः ॥ 2 ॥

2. With thrills of joy did the sages, who stood in eagerness to see Thee, allow themselves to be bathed in the world-sanctifying dust raised by the tread of Thy holy feet, as Thou didst make for the woods.

प्रचारय-त्यविरलशाद्वले तले पशून् विभो भवति समं कुमारकैः ।
आघासुरो न्यरुणदघाय वर्तनीं भयानकः सपदि शयानकाकृतिः ॥

3. O All-pervading Being! As Thou with the boys wert grazing the calves in the woodland pastures, a fierce demon named Aghasura having the form of a formidable python barred Thy way with evil intention.

महाचलप्रतिमतनो-र्गुहानिभ-प्रसारित-प्रथितमुखस्य कानने ।
मुखोदरं विहरणकौतुकाद्गताः कुमारकाः किमपि विदूरगे त्वयि ॥

4. While Thou wert gone a little ahead, the boys, who had mistaken the huge body of the Asura for a mountain and his wide open mouth for a cave, entered into it in their engrossment in play.

प्रमादतः प्रविशति पन्नगोदरं क्वथत्तनौ पशुपकुले सवत्सके ।
विदन्निदं त्वमपि विवेशिथ प्रभो सुहृज्जनं विशरणमाशु रक्षितुम् ॥

5. When, by mistake, the Gopa boys with all the calves had entered into the stomach of the snake and begun to smart there, Thou, O Lord, who apprehended the situation, also didst enter therein in order to save Thy helpless friends.

गलोदरे विपुलितवर्ष्मणा त्वया महोरगे लुठति निरुद्धमारुते ।
द्रुतं भवान् विदलितकण्ठमण्डलो विमोचयन् पशुपपशून् विनिर्ययौ ॥

6. When Thou, remaining within the throat of the snake, didst increase the size of Thy body, that huge python became breathless and began to writhe in agony, whereupon Thou didst quickly tear asunder its massive neck and come out, releasing the Gopa boys and the calves.

क्षणं दिवि त्वदुपगमार्थमास्थितं महासुरप्रभवमहो महो महत् ।
विनिर्गते त्वयि तु निलीनमञ्जसा नभःस्थले ननृतुरथो जगुः सुराः ॥

7. O What a wonder! A great brilliance that emerged from the Asura and stayed awhile in the sky awaiting Thy emergence, now entered into Thee, as Thou didst come out, while the gods in heaven danced and sang.

सविस्मयैः कमलभवादिभिः सुरै-रनुद्रुतस्तदनु गतः कुमारकैः ।
दिने पुनस्तरुणदशामुपेयुषि स्वकैर्भवानतनुत भोजनोत्सवम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Shortly after, while Brahma and the gods watched Thy movements in wonder, Thou didst join the company of the other cowherd boys and sit with them for lunch, as the sun reached the meridian.

विषाणिकामपि मुरलीं नितम्बके निवेशयन् कवलधरः कराम्बुजे ।
प्रहासयन् कलवचनैः कुमारकान् बुभोजिथ त्रिदशगणैर्मुदा नुतः ॥

9. With the horn and the flute tucked in Thy waist band, with a ball of rice held in Thy hand, and provoking peals of laughter among the boys by Thy humorous talks, Thou didst take Thy meal, while the hosts of gods sang Thy praise in joy.

सुखाशनं त्विह तव गोपमण्डले मखाशनात्प्रियमिव देवमण्डले ।
इति स्तुत-स्त्रिदशवरै-र्जगत्पते मरुत्पुरीनिलय गदात्प्रपाहि माम् ॥

10. O Lord of the Universe residing in the Temple of Guruvayoor! May Thou of whom the gods remarked that this homely meal with the cowherd boys was more pleasing to Thee than the offerings of a Yajna partaken amidst celestial beings—be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 52

KIDNAPPING OF CALVES

अन्यावतारनिकरे-ष्वनिरीक्षितं ते
भूमातिरेकमभिवीक्ष्य तदाघमोक्षे ।
ब्रह्मा परीक्षितुमनाः स परोक्षभावं
निन्येऽथ वत्सकगणान् प्रवितत्य मायाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Seeing in the release of Aghasura a manifestation of divine majesties unprecedented in any of Thy earlier Descents (Avataras), Brahma the Creator, bent on testing Thy powers,

hid away all the calves (by the exercise of his supernatural powers).

वत्सानवीक्ष्य विवशे पशुपोत्करे ता-
नानेतुकाम इव धातृमतानुवर्ती ।
त्वं सामिभुक्तकवलो गतवांस्तदानीं
भुक्तांस्तिरोधित सरोजभवः कुमारान् ॥ २ ॥

2. Seeing the cowherd boys worried by the disappearance of the calves, Thou, on the pretext of searching for them but really to enable Brahma to carry out his plan fully, didst walk away from thy companions with the half-eaten ball of rice in Thy hand. Brahma used this opportunity to hide away the cowherd boys also, on their finishing their meal.

वत्सायितस्तदनु गोपगणायितस्त्वं
शिक्यादिभाण्ड-मुरलीगवलादिरूपः ।
प्राग्वद्विहृत्य विपिनेषु चिराय सायं
त्वं माययाऽथ बहुधा व्रजमाययाथ ॥ ३ ॥

3. Thereupon, by virtue of Thy Maya (divine power) Thou didst Thyself assume the form of the lost calves and cowherd boys as also of their equipments like slings, blow-horns and flutes, and sport in the woods all through the day as before, and return to Vraja in the evening.

त्वामेव शिक्यगवलादिमयं दधानो
भूयस्त्वमेव पशुवत्सकबालरूपः ।
गोरूपिणीभिरपि गोपवधूमयीभि-
रासादितोऽसि जननीभिरतिप्रहर्षात् ॥ ४ ॥

4. Thou, who hadst assumed the form of the calves and the cowherd boys as also of the slings and blow-horns in their hands, wert received and fondled with much greater affection than usual by their mothers, namely the cows and the cowherd women (Gopis) of Vraja.

जीवं हि कंचिदभिमानवशात् स्वकीयं
मत्वा तनूज इति रागभरं वहन्त्यः ।
आत्मानमेव तु भवन्तमवाप्य सूनुं
प्रीतिं ययुर्न कियतीं वनिताश्च गावः ॥ 5 ॥

5. The Gopis and the cows, who had developed attachments,—through self-identification and sense of ownership—with regard to certain Jivas born by chance as their issue, what thrills of joy would they not have had when they obtained Thee, the very Self, as their offspring!

एवं प्रतिक्षण-विजृम्भित-हर्षभार-
निश्शेष-गोपगण-लालित-भूरिमूर्तिम् ।
त्वामग्रजोऽपि बुबुधे किल वत्सरान्ते
ब्रह्मात्मनोरपि महान् युवयोर्विशेषः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Only one year later did even Thy brother, Balarama, realise that it was Thou who wert being served in so many bodies by the entire Gokula with ever-increasing joy. For though both Thou and Thy brother are essentially of the nature of Brahman, there is a great difference between you two in many respects.

वर्षावधौ नवपुरातन-वत्सपालान्
दृष्ट्वा विवेकमसृणे द्रुहिणे विमूढे ।
प्रादीदृशः प्रतिनवान् मकुटाङ्गदादि-
भूषांश्चतुर्भुजयुजः सजलांबुदाभान् ॥ 7 ॥

7. At the end of the year when Brahma saw the old and the new cowherds and calves together, he was stupefied by his inability to distinguish between them. Thereupon, Thou didst reveal to him the new ones (born of Thee) by such distinguishing marks (of Thine) as diadem, shoulder ornaments and the like as also by four arms and the blue colour of a rain cloud.

प्रत्येकमेव कमलापरिलालिताङ्गान्
भोगीन्द्रभोगशयना-न्नयनाभिरामान् ।
लीलानिमीलितदृशः सनकादियोगि-
व्यासेवितान् कमलभूर्भवतो ददर्श ॥ 8 ॥

8. Brahma the Lotus-born, found each of them as Thee, possessing an enthrallingly beautiful form with blissful half-closed eyes, and resting on Adisesha with Mahalakshmi and sages like Sanaka attending on them.

नारायणाकृति-मसंख्यतमां निरीक्ष्य
सर्वत्र सेवकमपि स्वमवेक्ष्य धाता ।
मायानिमग्नहृदयो विमुमोह याव-
देको बभूविथ तदा कबलार्धपाणिः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Seeing innumerable forms of Narayana, each attended on by one Brahma like himself, Brahma the Creator was thrown into utter confusion as he was unable to recognise his own identity through being engulfed in Thy overpowering Maya. Just at that moment didst Thou reveal Thyself as a boy standing alone with a half-eaten ball of rice in hand.

नश्यन्मदे तदनु विश्वपतिं मुहुस्त्वां
नत्वा च नूतवति धातरि धाम याते ।
पोतैः समं प्रमुदितैः प्रविशन्निकेतं
वातालयाधिप विभो परिपाहि रोगात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. With his pride thus humbled, Brahma the Creator prostrated himself again and again before Thee, the Lord of all, and sang Thy praise before returning to his abode. Thou, O All-pervading Being and Dweller in the temple of Guruvayoor, who didst return to Thy home with all the boys in high spirits—may Thou be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 53

DESTRUCTION OF DHENUKASURA

अतीत्य बाल्यं जगतां पते त्व-मुपेत्य पौगण्डवयो मनोज्ञम् ।
उपेक्ष्य वत्सावन-मुत्सवेन प्रावर्तथा गोगणपालनायाम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Having passed childhood and reached the charming pre-adolescent stage of life (extending from the sixth to the tenth year), Thou didst give up the duty of tending calves and joyfully take up the work of herding grown up cattle.

उपक्रमस्यानुगुणैव सेयं मरुत्पुराधीश तव प्रवृत्तिः ।
गोत्रापरित्राण-कृतेऽवतीर्ण-स्तदेव देवाऽरभथास्तदा यत् ॥ 2 ॥

2. The work that Thou didst take up now, namely the tending of cows, was a fitting beginning for what Thou wert going to do in future. Born for the protection of *Gotra* (the earth), Thou didst only take the first step in that line by taking to the care of *Gotra* (herd of cattle).

कदापि रामेण समं वनान्ते वनश्रियं वीक्ष्य चरन् सुखेन ।
श्रीदामनाम्नः स्वसखस्य वाचा मोदादगा धेनुककाननं त्वम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Once while moving about happily in the woods with Balarama, viewing the beautiful scenery round about, Thou didst, at the suggestion of Thy friend Sridama, enter in a jubilant mood the forest inhabited by the Asura Dhenuka.

उत्तालतालीनिवहे त्वदुक्त्या बलेन धूतेऽथ बलेन दोर्भ्याम् ।
मृदुः खरश्चाभ्यपतत्पुरस्तात् फलोत्करो धेनुकदानवोऽपि ॥ 4 ॥

4. At Thy word the tall palm trees of that forest were shaken by the powerful Balarama with his strong arms, and innumerable palm fruits, ripe and raw, fell down. Thereupon the ass-shaped Dhenuka (a weakling in comparison to Thee) also appeared (roused up by the sound of falling palm fruits).

समुद्यतो धैनुकपालनेऽहं कथं वधं धैनुकमद्य कुर्वे ।
इतीव मत्वा ध्रुवमग्रजेन सुरौघयोद्धार-मजीघतस्त्वम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Thou hadst this Asura Dhenuka destroyed by Thy brother Balarama. Was it because Thou wert committed to the protection of *dhenuka* (herd of cows), that thou didst feel reluctant to kill a *Dhenuka* (even though he be an Asura of that name)?

तदीयभृत्यानपि जम्बुकत्वे-नोपागता-नग्रजसंयुतस्त्वम् ।
जम्बूफलानीव तदा निरास्थ-स्तालेषु खेलन् भगवन्निरास्थः ॥ 6 ॥

6. The followers of the Asura who came to attack in the form of *jambukas* (jackals), were done to death by Thee and Thy brother against the palm trees with utmost ease, as if they were mere *jambuka* fruits.

विनिघ्नति त्वय्यथ जम्बुकौघं सनामकत्वा-द्वरुणस्तदानीम् ।
भयाकुलो जम्बुकनामधेयं श्रुतिप्रसिद्धं व्यधितेति मन्ये ॥ 7 ॥

7. As Thou wert engaged in the destruction of *jambukas* (Asuras in the shape of foxes), I think Varuna hid his Vedic name *Jambuka*, so that he became the only *Jambuka* to escape slaughter!

तवावतारस्य फलं मुरारे सञ्जातमद्येति सुरैर्नुतस्त्वम् ।
सत्यं फलं जातमिहेति हासी बालैः समं तालफलान्यभुङ्क्थाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. As the Devas praised Thee that now indeed Thy descent had borne *fruit*, Thou didst laughingly retort that *fruits* (palm fruits) had surely been obtained, and began to eat the *fruits* of the palm trees along with the boys.

मधुद्रवस्रुन्ति बृहन्ति तानि फलानि मेदोभरभृन्ति भुक्त्वा ।
तृप्तैश्च दृप्तैर्भवनं फलौघं वहद्भिरागाः खलु बालकैस्त्वम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Thou with Thy cowherd boys now ate the luscious and fleshy fruits to the fill and then returned home, triumphantly carrying loads of them.

हतो हतो धेनुक इत्युपेत्य फलान्यदद्भि-र्मधुराणि लोकैः ।
जयेति जीवेति नुतो विभो त्वं मरुत्पुराधीश्वर पाहि रोगात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. With wild cries of *JAI* at Dhenuka's death, did people gather in the palm grove to eat the palm fruits. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who wert lustily cheered by them in gratitude—may Thou save me from my ailments!

CANTO 54

MENACE OF KALIYA

त्वत्सेवोत्कः सौभरिर्नाम पूर्वं कालिन्द्यन्तर्द्वादशाब्दं तपस्यन् ।
मीनव्राते स्नेहवान् भोगलोले तार्क्ष्यं साक्षा-दैक्षताग्रे कदाचित् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Once upon a time, a sage named Saubhari intent on Thy service, remained submerged in the waters of the Kalindi for twelve years, performing austerities. Consequently he became very much attached to the fish that sported happily in those waters. One day he happened to see before him Garuda (Thy eagle-vehicle who subsisted on fish).

त्वद्वाहं तं सक्षुधं तृक्षसूनुं मीनं कञ्चि-ज्जक्षतं लक्षयन् सः ।
तप्तश्चित्ते शप्तवानत्र चेत्त्वं जन्तून् भोक्ता जीवितञ्चापि मोक्ता ॥ 2 ॥

2. When the sage found Thy Garuda hungrily eating up the fish from the river, he was very much stricken in heart and cursed Garuda to the effect that he would lose his life itself if he came to eat any creature there.

तस्मिन् काले कालियः क्ष्वेलदर्पात् सर्पारातेः कल्पितं भागमश्नन् ।
तेन क्रोधात्त्वत्पदाम्भोजभाजा पक्षक्षिप्त-स्तद्दुरापं पयोऽगात् ॥ 3 ॥

3. At that time the serpent Kaliya, proud of the great power of his poison, took away the offerings due to Garuda, the enemy of all serpents. Angry at this, Garuda, Thy votary and vehicle, smote Kaliya with his wings, whereupon

the latter took refuge in the Kalindi, which had become a prohibited area for Garuda because of the sage's curse.

घोरे तस्मिन् सूरजानीरवासे तीरे वृक्षाः विक्षताः क्ष्वेलवेगात् ।
पक्षिव्राताः पेतुरभ्रे पतन्तः कारुण्यार्द्रं त्वन्मनस्तेन जातम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Whilst the serpent dwelt in the river Kalindi, the daughter of the sun, all the trees on its banks dried up, and all the birds flying above dropped down, owing to the deadliness of the serpent's poison. Thy heart was moved with pity (on seeing the sufferings of all these living beings).

काले तस्मिन्नेकदा सीरपाणिं मुक्त्वा याते यामुनं काननान्तम् ।
त्वय्युद्दाम-ग्रीष्मभीष्मोष्मतप्ता गोगोपाला व्यापिबन् क्ष्वेलतोयम् ॥

5. One day, when, unaccompanied by Balarama, Thou hadst gone with the cattle to the woods near the Yamuna, the cowherds and the cows, parched in the burning heat of summer, slaked their thirst by drinking the poisoned river water.

नश्यज्जीवान् विच्युतान् क्ष्मातले तान् विश्वान् पश्यन्नच्युत त्वं दयार्द्रः ।
प्राप्योपान्तं जीवयामासिथ द्राक् पीयूषाम्भोवर्षिभिः श्रीकटाक्षैः ॥ 6 ॥

6. O Undecaying One! Seeing them all fallen lifeless on the ground, Thou, overcome by pity, didst approach their bodies and revive them all with a look of Thy auspicious eyes, which seemed to drench them with life-giving nectar.

किं किं जातो हर्षवर्षातिरेकः सर्वाङ्गेष्वि-त्युत्थिता गोपसङ्घाः ।
दृष्ट्वाऽग्रे त्वां त्वत्कृतं तद्विदन्त-स्त्वामालिङ्गन् दृष्टनानाप्रभावाः ॥

7. The revived Gopas, feeling an influx of indescribable joy in every limb, got up and embraced Thee, attributing their strange bliss to Thee, whom they saw standing in front and whose powers they had witnessed several times before.

गावश्चैवं लब्धजीवाः क्षणेन स्फीतानन्दा-स्त्वाञ्च दृष्ट्वा पुरस्तात् ।
द्रागावव्रुः सर्वतो हर्षबाष्पं व्यामुञ्चन्त्यो मन्दमुद्यन्निनादाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. The cows, too, having come back to life in a short time and seeing Thee in front, quickly surrounded Thee affectionately, shedding tears of joy and lowing in a subdued way.

रोमाञ्चोऽयं सर्वतो नः शरीरे भूयस्यन्तः काचिदानन्दमूर्च्छा ।
आश्चर्योऽयं क्ष्वेलवेगो मुकुन्दे-त्युक्तो गोपैर्नन्दितो वन्दितोऽभूः ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'All our hairs are standing on end, and we are experiencing intense ecstasy within. Wonderful, indeed, is the action of this poison, O Mukunda!' Thus did the Gopas praise and congratulate Thee.

एवं भक्तान् मुक्तजीवानपि त्वं मुग्धापाङ्गै-रस्तरोगांस्तनोषि ।
तादृग्भूत-स्फीतकारुण्यभूमा रोगात्पाया वायुगेहाधिनाथ ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Resident of Guruvayoor! May Thou, whose charming glance, expressive of abounding mercy, brought back to life and health even expired devotees of Thine—be pleased to relieve me of my ailments!

CANTO 55

DANCE UPON KALIYA

अथ वारिणि घोरतरं फणिनं प्रतिवारयितुं कृतधीर्भगवन् ।
द्रुतमारिथ तीरग-नीपतरुं विषमारुत-शोषित-पर्णचयम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Next, resolved to rid the river of that fierce serpent's unrestricted sway, Thou didst get up a Kadamba tree standing on the bank and having all its leaves withered by the poison.

अधिरुह्य पदाम्बुरुहेण च तं नवपल्लवतुल्य-मनोज्ञरुचा ।
ह्रदवारिणि दूरतरं न्यपतः परिघूर्णित-घोरतरङ्गगणे ॥ 2 ॥

2. Having climbed that leafless tree with Thy charming feet resembling tender leaves, Thou didst take a long leap to

reach the deep cavern in midstream whose surface was covered with swirling waves of water.

भुवनत्रयभारभृतो भवतो गुरुभारविकम्पि-विजृम्भिजला ।
परिमज्जयति स्म धनुश्शतकं तटिनी झटिति स्फुटघोषवती ॥ ३ ॥

3. As Thou, the bearer of the weight of the universe, dived into its depths, the turbulent waters of the stream swelled up with a roaring noise by the weight of Thy body, inundating its banks for a hundred yards.

अथ दिक्षु विदिक्षु परिक्षुभित-भ्रमितोदरवारि-निनादभरैः ।
उदका-दुदगा-दुरगाधिपति-स्त्वदुपान्त-मशान्तरुषा-न्धमनाः ॥ 4 ॥

4. The deafening sound made by the tidal waves into which the swirling waters of the river were beaten up by the impact, threw Kaliya into a fit of blinding fury, which made him emerge from the waters and attack Thee.

फणश्रृङ्गसहस्र-विनिःसृमर-ज्वलदग्निकणोग्र-विषाम्बुधरम् ।
पुरतः फणिनं समलोकयथा बहुश्रृङ्गिण-मञ्जनशैलमिव ॥ 5 ॥

5. The serpent Kaliya was now seen in front as a veritable mountain of black stone with peaks constituted of his numerous hoods, all emitting fluid poison deadly in effect and scintillating with sparks of fire.

ज्वलदक्षि-परिक्षरदुग्रविष-श्वसनोष्मभरः स महाभुजगः ।
परिदश्य भवन्त-मनन्तबलं परिवेष्टय-दस्फुटचेष्टमहो ॥ 6 ॥

6. Alas! That huge serpent, having flaming eyes and scattering all round the fire and fumes of his deadly poison, bit Thee of limitless strength all over, and then (seeing Thee still alive) coiled himself around Thee tightly, making Thy body and movements invisible.

अविलोक्य भवन्त-मथाकुलिते तटगामिनि बालकधेनुगणे ।
व्रजगेहतलेऽप्यनिमित्तशतं समुदीक्ष्य गता यमुनां पशुपाः ॥ 7 ॥

7. The boys and the cows, standing on the bank, were distressed to note Thy disappearance, while the Gopas, observing innumerable evil omens, gathered on the banks of the Yamuna.

अखिलेषु विभो भवदीयदशा-मवलोक्य जिहासुषु जीवभरम् ।
फणिबन्धनमाशु विमुच्य जवा-दुदगम्यत हासजुषा भवता ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Lord! While all of them stood overwhelmed with grief at Thy plight, ready even to cast away their life that now looked a mere burden, Thou didst release Thyself from the coils of the snake and appear above the surface of the waters with a smiling face.

अधिरुह्य ततः फणिराजफणा-न्ननृते भवता मृदुपादरुचा ।
कलशिञ्जित-नूपुरमञ्जुमिल-त्करकङ्कण-सङ्कुल-सङ्क्वणितम् ॥

9. Then didst Thou mount on the heads of the serpent and begin to dance thereon, with the beauty of Thy tender feet blending with the brilliance of the serpent's crown gems, and with the sweet sounds of Thy anklets mingling with those of Thy bangles, as Thou didst keep time for Thy dance with the swing of Thy arms.

जहृषुः पशुपा-स्तुतुषु-र्मुनयो ववृषुः कुसुमानि सुरेन्द्रगणाः ।
त्वयि नृत्यति मारुतगेहपते परिपाहि स मां त्वमदान्तगदात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. As Thou didst perform Thy dance, the cowherds rejoiced, the sages hymned, and the gods rained flowers. O Lord of Guruvayoor! deign to arrest the progress of my uncontrollable ailment (as Thou didst arrest the pride of serpent Kaliya)!

CANTO 56

BESTOWAL OF GRACE ON KALIYA

रुचिरकम्पित-कुण्डलमण्डलः सुचिरमीश नर्नात्तिथ पन्नगे ।
अमरताडित-दुन्दुभिसुन्दरं वियति गायति दैवतयौवते ॥ 1 ॥

1. Long didst Thou dance on the hoods of the serpent, with Thy ear ornament quivering rhythmically, while the heavenly damsels sang to the accompaniment of drums sounded by the gods on high.

नमति यद्यदमुष्य शिरो हरे परिविहाय तदुन्नतमुन्नतम् ।
परिमथन् पदपङ्करुहा चिरं व्यहरथाः करतालमनोहरम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Hari! As one hood of the serpent drooped down under Thy weight, Thou didst leave that and jump on to a raised one. Thus didst Thou trample hood after hood with Thy lotus feet, as Thou didst perform a charming dance for long, keeping time with the clapping of hands.

त्वदवभग्न-विभुग्न-फणागणे गलित-शोणित-शोणितपाथसि ।
फणिपता-ववसीदति सन्नता-स्तदबला-स्तव माधव पादयोः ॥ 3 ॥

3. With his hoods crushed and drooping, and with his body bleeding so profusely as to redden the blue waters of the Yamuna, the lord of serpents got exhausted, and thereupon there appeared before Thee, O Madhava, his wives, who prostrated at Thy feet in all humility.

अयि पुरैव चिराय परिश्रुत-त्वदनुभाव-विलीनहृदो हि ताः ।
मुनिभिरप्यनवाप्यपथैः स्तवै-र्नुनुवुरीश भवन्त-मयन्त्रितम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord all! These serpent-wives, having for long heard of Thy greatness, had their minds absorbed in Thee, and so they hailed Thee with hymns of praise characterised by unrestricted exuberance and wisdom which are beyond the powers of even great sages.

फणिवधूगण-भक्तिविलोकन-प्रविकस-त्करुणाकुलचेतसा ।
फणिपति-र्भवताच्युत जीवित-स्त्वयि समर्पित-मूर्तिरवानमत् ॥ 5 ॥

5. The serpent chief, who was spared by Thee from death because of pity roused by the devotional fervour of his wives, now fell prostrate at Thy feet.

रमणकं व्रज वारिधिमध्यगं फणिरिपुर्न करोति विरोधिताम् ।
इति भवद्वचना-न्यतिमानयन् फणिपति-र्निरगादुरगैः समम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thou didst then ask him to go to the island Ramanaka situated in the mid-ocean and assure him that Garuda, the enemy of serpents, would not attack him there. In obedience to these words of Thine, he departed (from the Yamuna to the island) along with his serpent hosts.

फणिवधूजन-दत्तमणिव्रज-ज्वलितहार-दुकूल-विभूषितः ।
तटगतैः प्रमदाश्रुविमिश्रितैः समगथाः स्वजनै-र्दिवसावधौ ॥ 7 ॥

7. Then, decked all over with the silk garments and the brilliant necklaces presented by the serpent wives, Thou didst towards evening rejoin Thy clansmen, who were awaiting Thee on the river bank, with their eyes filled with tears of joy at Thy sight.

निशि पुनस्तमसा व्रजमन्दिरं व्रजितुमक्षम एव जनोत्करे ।
स्वपिति तत्र भवच्चरणाश्रये दवकृशानुररुन्ध समन्ततः ॥ 8 ॥

8. Unable to proceed to their homes in Vraja owing to the darkness of night, the Gopa community (who had come in search of Thee) had to sleep on the river bank depending on Thy protection, but they soon found themselves engulfed by a forest fire.

प्रबुधितानथ पालय पालये-त्युदयदार्तरवान् पशुपालकान् ।
अवितुमाशु पपाथ महानलं किमिह चित्रमयं खलु ते मुखम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. The sleeping Gopas were awakened (by the threatening fire), and began to cry for help in piteous tones, whereupon, in order to save them, Thou didst 'drink in' that fire.

That is no wonder in as much as fire is but Thy face (it being an element that emerged from Thy face in Thy Cosmic Form).

शिखिनि वर्णत एव हि पीतता परिलसत्यधुना क्रिययाऽप्यसौ ।
इति नुतः पशुपैर्मुदितैर्विभो हर हरे दुरितैः सह मे गदान् ।। 10 ।।

10. *Pitata* (yellow hue) is a description applicable to fire till now only in respect of its colour in an adjectival sense. Now *Pitata* (the condition of being drunk) has become true of it in a verbal sense also (since Thou didst happen to 'drink' it). O Hari! May Thou, who wert praised in this way by the jubilant Gopas, be pleased to rid me of my ailments as also of the sins (that must have been their cause)!

CANTO 57

DESTRUCTION OF PRALAMBASURA

रामसखः क्वापि दिने कामद भगवन् गतो भवान् विपिनम् ।
सूनुभिरपि गोपानां धेनुभिरभिसंवृतो लसद्वेषः ।। 1 ।।

1. O Fulfiller of the prayers of all! Bedecked with shining jewellery, Thou hadst gone to the woods one day, accompanied by Balarama and surrounded by Gopa boys and cows.

सन्दर्शयन् बलाय स्वैरं वृन्दावनश्रियं विमलाम् ।
काण्डीरैः सह बालै-र्भाण्डीरक-मागमो वटं क्रीडन् ।। 2 ।।

2. Accompanied by the boys with cowherd's staff in hand Thou didst walk, on, now frolicking, now directing Balarama's attention to the beauties of the forest, until Thou didst reach the banyan tree known as Bhandeeraka.

तावत्तावकनिधन-स्पृहयालु-र्गोपमूर्तिरदयालुः ।
दैत्यः प्रलम्बनामा प्रलम्बबाहुं भवन्तमापेदे ।। 3 ।।

3. Just then a wicked demon named *Pralamba* approached Thee in the disguise of a Gopa, with the intention of killing Thee who art *pralamba* (possessed of long arms).

जानन्नप्यविजानन्निव तेन समं निबद्धसौहार्दः ।
वटनिकटे पटुपशुप-व्याबद्धं द्वन्द्वयुद्धमारब्धाः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Though Thou hadst knowledge of his evil intentions, Thou didst cultivate friendship with him, seemingly unaware of his designs, and then engage Thyself underneath the banyan tree in a game of duel (wrestling), which the Gopas skilled in that art had arranged.

गोपान् विभज्य तन्वन् सङ्घं बलभद्रकं भवत्कमपि ।
त्वद्बलभीरुं दैत्यं त्वद्बलगत-मन्वमन्यथा भगवन् ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord! Dividing the Gopas into two teams led by Thyself and Balarama respectively, Thou didst permit the Asura, who was afraid of Thy strength, to be in Thy team (so that he would not have to contest with Thee).

कल्पितविजेतृवहने समरे परयूथगं स्वदयिततरम् ।
श्रीदामानमधत्थाः पराजितो भक्तदासतां प्रथयन् ॥ 6 ॥

6. In demonstration, as it were, of Thy being the servant of Thy devotees, Thou didst carry on Thy shoulders Thy dear friend Sridama, on being defeated by him as a member of the opposite team, thus acting up to the rule of the game that the vanquished person should carry the victor on his shoulder.

एवं बहुषु विभूमन् बालेषु वहत्सु वाह्यमानेषु ।
रामविजितः प्रलम्बो जहार तं दूरतो भवद्भीत्या ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Lord! Accordingly, many cowherd boys had to mutually bear, or be borne by, others. Among them was Pralamba who, being defeated by Balarama, carried him on the shoulder, and in the process managed to take him far away out of fear of Thee (for carrying out his nefarious purpose).

त्वद्दूरं गमयन्तं तं दृष्ट्वा हलिनि विहितगरिमभरे ।
दैत्यः स्वरूपमागा-द्यद्रूपात् स हि बलोऽपि चकितोऽभूत् ।। 8 ।।

8. Seeing that he was being borne away to a great distance, Balarama increased his weight (by his divine powers), whereupon the demon revealed his real form, which was frightful enough to cause a shiver even in Rama.

उच्चतया दैत्यतनो-स्त्वन्मुख-मालोक्य दूरतो रामः ।
विगतभयो दृढमुष्टचा भृशदुष्टं सपदि पिष्टवानेनम् ।। 9 ।।

9. The Asura was so tall that from his shoulder Balarama could see Thy face at a distance. Encouraged by Thy sight, he cast away all fear and fisted the wicked demon to pulp.

हत्वा दानववीरं प्राप्तं बलमालिलिङ्गिथ प्रेम्णा ।
तावन्मिलतोर्युवयोः शिरसि कृता पुष्पवृष्टिरमरगणैः ।। 10 ।।

10. The Devas shed a shower of flowers over the heads of both of you as you stood together, Thyself embracing Balarama affectionately on his return after killing the great demon.

आलम्बो भुवनानां प्रालम्बं निधनमेव-मारचयन् ।
कालं विहाय सद्यो लोलम्बरुचे हरे हरेः क्लेशान् ।। 11 ।।

11. O Hari, lustrous like a shining black bee! May Thou, who art the saviour of the worlds and who didst bring about the destruction of Pralamba, be pleased to save me from my tribulations!

CANTO 58

RESCUE FROM WILD FIRE

त्वयि विहरणलोले बालजालैः प्रलम्ब-
प्रमथनसविलम्बे धेनवः स्वैरचाराः ।
तृणकुतुकनिविष्टा दूरदूरं चरन्त्यः
किमपि विपिन-मैषीकाख्य-मीषांबभूवुः ।। 1 ।।

1. Whilst Thou wert pre-occupied with the destruction of Pralamba and with sports in the company of other Gopas, the cows in quest of grass moved away a long distance and entered another forest known as Aishikam.

अनधिगत-निदाघ-क्रौर्य-वृन्दावनान्ताद्-
बहिरिदमुपयाताः काननं धेनवस्ताः ।
तव विरहविषण्णा ऊष्मलग्रीष्मताप-
प्रसरविसरदम्भ-स्याकुलां स्तम्भमापुः ॥ 2 ॥

2. These cows, having wandered away from the cool groves of Vrindavana where the cruel heat of the sun had not penetrated, smarted under the scorching sun of summer as also out of grief at separation from Thee, and consequently stood stunned and motionless.

तदनु सह सहायै-र्दूरमन्विष्य शौरे
गलितसरणि-मुञ्जारण्यसञ्जातखेदम् ।
पशुकुलमभिवीक्ष्य क्षिप्रमानेतुमारा-
त्त्वयि गतवति ही ही सर्वतोऽग्निर्जजृम्भे ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Lord! Subsequently, searching long for the cows with Thy mates, Thou didst discover them in the end standing in a state of distress in a trackless Munja forest. But alas! even as Thou wert nearing them, a wild fire broke out and spread all around.

सकलहरिति दीप्ते घोरभाङ्कारभीमे
शिखिनि विहतमार्गा अर्धदग्धा इवार्ताः ।
अहह भुवनबन्धो पाहि पाहीति सर्वे
शरणमुपगतास्त्वां तापहर्तारमेकम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. As the forest fire with its terrific crash and roar spread out and cut off all means of escape, the cowherds were in utter distress as if they were already half burnt up, and began to cry out piteously for help to Thee, who art the friend of all the worlds and the only saviour of all beings from their trials and tribulations.

अलमलमतिभीत्या सर्वतो मीलयध्वं
दृशमिति तव वाचा मीलिताक्षेषु तेषु ।
क्वनु दवदहनोऽसौ कुत्र मुञ्जाटवी सा
सपदि ववृतिरे ते हन्त भाण्डीरदेशे ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'Be not afraid. Let all close their eyes.' Instructed thus by Thee, all stood with their eyes closed, and lo! in a trice they found themselves under the banyan tree Bhandiraka, and there was no trace anywhere of the Munja forest or the fire raging in it!

जय जय तव माया केयमीशेति तेषां
नुतिभिरुदितहासो बद्धनानाविलासः ।
पुनरपि विपिनान्ते प्राचरः पाटलादि-
प्रसवनिकरमात्र-ग्राह्यघर्मानुभावे ॥ 6 ॥

6. Wonderstruck at their own rescue, Thy companions exclaimed 'Hail, hail unto Thee, O Lord! Thy mysterious power is unfathomable!' Acknowledging their praise by a mere smile, Thou didst continue to roam about in a frolicsome mood in the heart of the woodlands, where the growth of trees was so thick that only by the sight of Nikara trees in blossom could one infer that the summer season was on.

त्वयि विमुखमिवोच्चै-स्तापभारं वहन्तं
तव भजनवदन्तः-पङ्कमुच्छोषयन्तम् ।
तव भुजवदुदश्चद् भूरितेजःप्रवाहं
तपसमयमनैषी-र्यामुनेषु स्थलेषु ॥ 7 ॥

7. Like the raging heat of passions in the minds of persons without God-love, like the intense warmth of God-love that dries up the mud and mire of sins in the hearts of men, like the brilliance of Thy uplifted arms (holding Thy divine discus Sudarsana)—the summer months made themselves felt, as Thou didst spend them on the banks of the Yamuna.

तदनु जलदजालै-स्त्वद्वपुस्तुल्यभाभि-
र्विकस-दमलविद्युत्-पीतवासो-विलासैः ।
सकलभुवनभाजां हर्षदां वर्षवेलां
क्षितिधरकुहरेषु स्वैरवासी व्यनैषीः ॥ 8 ॥

8. Then came the rainy season, bringing joy to all, when the sky was overcast with clouds blue in colour like Thy complexion and clothed in brilliant streaks of lightning of increasing frequency (resembling the radiance of Thy yellow wearing silk). During that season Thou didst conduct Thy sportive activities in the caves of the mountain Govardhana.

कुहरतलनिविष्टं त्वां गरिष्ठं गिरीन्द्रः
शिखिकुल-नवकेका-काकुभिः स्तोत्रकारी ।
स्फुट-कुटजकदम्ब-स्तोमपुष्पाञ्जलिञ्च
प्रविदध-दनुभेजे देव गोवर्धनोऽसौ ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! This mountain king Govardhana received Thee, the most honoured of all guests at its caves, with songs of praise in the form of the musical cries of peacocks (delighted with the rain-clouds), and with flower-offerings in the shape of heaps of full blown blossoms falling at Thy feet from the branches of the Kutaja and Kadamba trees.

अथ शरदमुपेतां तां भवद्भक्तचेतो-
विमलसलिलपूरां मानयन् काननेषु ।
तृणममलवनान्ते चारु सञ्चारयन् गाः
पवनपुरपते त्वं देहि मे देहसौख्यम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! When the spring season arrived, Thou didst enjoy its beauty as reflected in the forest streams brimming with water as pure as the hearts of Thy devotees, and go about grazing the cattle in the pleasant woodland pastures. May Thou be pleased to grant me health!

CANTO 59

THE CALL OF THE FLUTE

त्वद्वपु-र्नवकलायकोमलं प्रेमदोहन-मशेषमोहनम् ।

ब्रह्म तत्त्वपरचिन्मुदात्मकं वीक्ष्य सम्मुमुहुरन्वहं स्त्रियः ॥ 1 ॥

1. Beautiful like the Kalaya flower, evoking the sentiment of love in all, and enthralling every one by its charm, Thy form, which was the very embodiment of Sat-Chid-ananda Brahman, attracted the women of Vraja very much, as they saw Thee day by day.

मन्मथोन्मथित-मानसाः क्रमा-त्त्वद्विलोकनरता-स्ततस्ततः ।

गोपिकास्तव न सेहिरे हरे काननोपगति-मप्यहर्मुखे ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Hari! These Gopikas, with their minds oppressed by Manmatha (Cupid), gradually became so fond of seeing Thee always that they could not even brook Thy departure to the forest at dawn.

निर्गते भवति दत्तदृष्टय-स्त्वद्गतेन मनसा मृगेक्षणाः ।

वेणुनादमुपकर्ण्य दूरत-स्त्वद्विलास-कथयाऽभिरेमिरे ॥ 3 ॥

3. On Thy starting out (for grazing cattle), these women would watch Thee (till Thou wert lost to view), and then, with their minds centred on Thee, listen to the sound of Thy flute from afar, and delight themselves by recounting Thy various sportive activities.

काननान्तमितवान् भवानपि स्निग्धपादपतले मनोरमे ।

व्यत्ययाकलित-पादमास्थितः प्रत्यपूरयत वेणुनालिकाम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. And as for Thyself, Thou wouldst, on reaching the forest, stand cross-legged under a shady tree, and play Thy flute, filling it with Thy life-breath (which emerged as soul-stirring tunes out of it).

मारबाणधुत-खेचरीकुलं निर्विकार-पशुपक्षि-मण्डलम् ।

द्रावणं च दृषदामपि प्रभो तावकं व्यजनि वेणुकूजितम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord! The ravishing strains of Thy flute sent the shafts of Cupid into the hearts of Apsara bands hovering in the sky, stunned brute creations like cows and birds into a state of emotional stillness, and melted even the rocks in the neighbourhood into a state of liquidity.

वेणुरन्ध्र-तरलाङ्गुलीदलं तालसञ्चलित-पादपल्लवम् ।
तत् स्थितं तव परोक्षमप्यहो संविचिन्त्य मुमुहु-र्व्रजाङ्गनाः ॥ 6 ॥

6. The women of Vraja got into a state of ecstatic absorption, as they visualised Thee in their minds, indirectly though it be, running Thy nimble fingers over the stops of the flute and moving Thy tender feet to keep time with its strains.

निर्विशङ्क-भवदङ्गदर्शिनीः खेचरीः खगमृगान् पशूनपि ।
त्वत्पदप्रणयि काननं च ता धन्यधन्यमिति नन्वमानयन् ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'Fortunate indeed are the Apsara women in the skies, fortunate are the birds, animals and cows of the place, and fortunate too are even the forest lands on which Thou dost tread Thy feet, because they have the unrestricted opportunity to view Thy form'—so mused the Gopikas of Vraja.

आपिबेय-मधरामृतं कदा वेणुमुक्त-रसशेषमेकदा ।
दूरतो बत कृतं दुराशये-त्याकुला मुहुरिमाः समामुहन् ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Shall we ever have the bliss of imbibing what is left of the honey of His kiss after the flute has enjoyed it to its fill? Ah! why crave for the impossible!' So thought the Gopikas again and again in utter distress and despair.

प्रत्यहं च पुनरित्थमङ्गना-श्चित्तयोनिजनिता-दनुग्रहात् ।
बद्धरागविवशास्त्वयि प्रभो नित्यमापुरिह कृत्यमूढताम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! The continuous promptings of Cupid became a blessing to these women in so far as it brought in them intensity of attachment to Thee and consequent detachment from all worldly concerns.

रागस्तावज्जायते हि स्वभावा-न्मोक्षोपायो यत्नतः स्यान्न वा स्यात् ।
तासां त्वेकं तद्द्वयं लब्धमासीत् भाग्यं भाग्यं पाहि मां मारुतेश ॥

10. Attachment between the sexes is spontaneous (being the product of a natural instinct), while devotion to God, the means of salvation, may result after great effort or may not even then. But oh! what a blessing, what a rare good fortune, that in these women both these have coincided[16] (as their passionate attachment was fixed on Thee, the Supreme Purusha incarnated as Krishna on whom all spiritual aspirants also fix their mind)! O Lord of Guruvayoor! Offer me protection.

CANTO 60

ROBBING GOPIS OF THEIR ROBES

मदनातुरचेतसोऽन्वहं भवदङ्घ्रिद्वय-दास्यकाम्यया
यमुनातटसीम्नि सैकतीं तरलाक्ष्यो गिरिजां समार्चिचन् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Prompted by longing to be Thy handmaids, the love-lorn beauties of Vraja performed the worship of the Divine Mother on the banks of the Yamuna, using an image made of sand (in order to invoke the Mother's blessings for the fulfilment of their longing).[17]

तव नामकथारताः समं सुदृशः प्रातरुपागता नदीम् ।
उपहारशतै-रपूजयन् दयितो नन्दसुतो भवेदिति ॥ 2 ॥

2. These lovely women, whose delight consisted in dwelling on Thy name and Thy deeds, gathered together at dawn on the banks of the Yamuna and worshipped the Divine Mother with numerous offerings, and prayed that Nanda's son might become their husband.

इति मासमुपाहितव्रता-स्तरलाक्षी-रभिवीक्ष्य ता भवान् ।
करुणामृदुलो नदीतटं समयासी-त्तदनुग्रहेच्छया ॥ 3 ॥

3. When they had observed this vow for a month, Thou, moved by compassion, didst go to the banks of the Yamuna with a view to blessing them.

नियमावसितौ निजाम्बरं तटसीमन्यवमुच्य तास्तदा ।
यमुनाजल-खेलनाकुलाः पुरतस्त्वा-मवलोक्य लज्जिताः ॥ 4 ॥

4. At the end of their worship, these Gopikas, leaving their robes on the river bank, were engrossed in water sports in the Yamuna, when, with a shock of shame, they saw Thee approaching.

त्रपया नमिताननास्वथो वनितास्वम्बरजाल-मन्तिके ।
निहितं परिगृह्य भूरुहो विटपं त्वं तरसाऽधिरूढवान् ॥ 5 ॥

5. As the women stood, their heads hung in shame, Thou didst snatch all their robes kept nearby, and quickly getting up a neighbouring tree, seat Thyself on a branch of it.

इह तावदुपेत्य नीयतां वसनं वः सुदृशो यथायथम् ।
इति नर्ममृदुस्मिते त्वयि ब्रुवति व्यामुमुहे वधूजनैः ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'O fair ones! Come near and receive each her own robes!' Hearing these words of Thine, uttered with an engaging smile, the women stood perplexed (unable to come out of the water in their nakedness).

अयि जीव चिरं किशोर न-स्तव दासीरवशीकरोषि किम् ।
प्रदिशाम्बर-मम्बुजेक्षणे-त्युदितस्त्वं स्मितमेव दत्तवान् ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'O dear boy! May you live long! Why do you thus tease us, your handmaids? Give us our robes.' On the Gopikas who addressed Thee thus, Thou didst bestow only Thy smile.

अधिरुह्य तटं कृताञ्जलीः परिशुद्धाः स्वगतीर्निरीक्ष्य ताः ।
वसनान्यखिला-न्यनुग्रहं पुनरेवं गिरमप्यदा मुदा ॥ 8 ॥

8. Seeing the girls come up the river bank and stand with hands folded in salutation, and seeing also that they

were pure at heart and fully resigned to Thee, Thou didst give them all the clothings, along with the following words of blessing:

विदितं ननु वो मनीषितं वदितार-स्त्विह योग्यमुत्तरम् ।
यमुनापुलिने सचन्द्रिकाः क्षणदा इत्यबला-स्त्वमूचिवान् ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'Look! I know your mind. You will get the proper response on moon-lit nights on the sand-banks of the Yamuna.' Thus didst Thou say to the womenfolk.

उपकर्ण्य भवन्मुखच्युतं मधुनिष्यन्दि वचो मृगीदृशः ।
प्रणयादयि वीक्ष्य वीक्ष्य ते वदनाब्जं शनकैर्गृहं गताः ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord! Hearing these honeyed words dropping from Thy mouth, the women reluctantly started home, casting loving, lingering looks on Thy lotus face.

इति नन्वनुगृह्य वल्लवी-र्विपिनान्तेषु पुरेव सञ्चरन् ।
करुणाशिशिरो हरे हर त्वरया मे सकलामयावलिम् ॥ 11 ॥

11. O Lord Hari! Thou who didst thus bless the cowherdesses and continue to roam the woods (with cows and cowherd boys), and whose heart is ever melting with compassion for devotees—may Thou be pleased to put an end to all my ailments soon!

CANTO 61

BLESSING THE WIVES OF BRAHMANAS

ततश्च वृन्दावनतोऽतिदूरतो वनं गतस्त्वं खलु गोपगोकुलैः ।
हृदन्तरे भक्ततर-द्विजाङ्गना-कदम्बका-नुग्रहणाग्रहं वहन् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Once, with a view to bestowing Thy grace on a large group of Brahmana women, Thou didst travel with the cows and cowherds to a forest settlement far away from Vrindavana.

ततो निरीक्ष्याशरणे वनान्तरे किशोरलोकं क्षुधितं तृषाकुलम् ।
अदूरतो यज्ञपरान् द्विजान् प्रति व्यसर्जयो दीदिवियाचनाय तान् ॥

2. Trudging through uninhabited woods, the cowherd boys were stricken with hunger and thirst. So, Thou didst direct them to go to a place not very far off, where some Brahmanas were performing a Yajna, and to beg of them some food.

गतेष्वथो तेष्वभिधाय तेऽभिधां कुमारके-ष्वोदनयाचिषु प्रभो ।
श्रुतिस्थिरा अप्यभिनिन्युरश्रुतिं न किञ्चिदूचुश्च महीसुरोत्तमाः ॥

3. O Lord! When the boys asked them for food in Thy name, those pretentious Brahmanas, though sound of hearing, kept silent, as if they did not hear. [Or alternatively: though well versed in Sruti (the Vedas), those Brahmanas behaved in violation of the Srutis by not responding to the Lord's request for food].

अनादरात् खिन्नधियो हि बालकाः समाययु-र्युक्तमिदं हि यज्वसु ।
चिरादभक्ताः खलु ते महीसुराः कथं हि भक्तं त्वयि तैः समर्प्यते ॥

4. The boys returned, wounded at heart by this refusal. Such conduct as evinced by these Brahmanas is not strange in Vedic ritualists like them. For being always *abhaktas* (without any Bakti or devotion to the Lord), how could they make an offering of *bhakta* (cooked rice) to Thee? [Or alternatively: 'how could these Brahmanas, who for long were *a-bhaktas* (without any cooked rice, *i.e.* having given up rice food as a part of ritualistic discipline), offer Thee *bhakta* (cooked rice)'?]

निवेदयध्वं गृहिणीजनाय मां दिशेयुरन्नं करुणाकुला इमाः ।
इति स्मितार्द्रं भवतेरिता गता-स्ते दारका दारजनं ययाचिरे ॥

5. 'Inform the wives of these Brahmanas that I have arrived here. They will give you food, as they possess a sympathetic heart.' Thus instructed by Thee with a smile, the boys approached these women and asked for food.

गृहीतनाम्नि त्वयि सम्भ्रमाकुला-श्चतुर्विधं भोज्यरसं प्रगृह्य ताः ।
चिरं धृतत्वत्प्रविलोकनाग्रहाः स्वकैर्निरुद्धा अपि तूर्णमाययुः ॥ 6 ॥

6. These women, who had for long entertained the desire to see Thee, were thrilled with excitement at the very mention of Thy name, and immediately ran to Thee with four kinds of food, in spite of being forbidden to do so by their kith and kin.

विलोलपिञ्छं चिकुरे कपोलयोः समुल्लसत्कुण्डल-मार्द्रमीक्षिते ।
निधाय बाहुं सुहृदंससीमनि स्थितं भवन्तं समलोकयन्त ताः ॥ 7 ॥

7. They saw Thee standing with a hand resting on the shoulders of a friend, face lit up with a kindly look, cheeks glowing with the reflection of Thy ear ornaments, and crest decorated with quivering peacock feathers.

तदा च काचि-त्त्वदुपागमोद्यता गृहीतहस्ता दयितेन यज्वना ।
तदैव सञ्चिन्त्य भवन्तमञ्जसा विवेश कैवल्यमहो कृतिन्यसौ ॥ 8 ॥

8. Indeed! One of the very fortunate of these women, being held back by her husband, a ritual-bound Brahmana, immediately got absorbed in contemplation on Thee, and in no time attained to liberation with utmost ease.

आदाय भोज्याननुगृह्य ताः पुन-स्त्वदङ्गसङ्ग-स्पृहयोज्झतीर्गृहम् ।
विलोक्य यज्ञाय विसर्जयन्निमा-श्चकर्थ भर्तॄनपि तास्वगर्हणान् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Though these women liked to abandon their homes and be with Thee at Thy service, Thou, after gracefully receiving their food-offerings and giving them Thy blessings, didst direct them to go home for the proper conduct of the Vedic sacrificial rites. Besides, by Thy grace, their husbands were rendered free from all ill-feeling towards them for their disobedience.

निरूप्य दोषं निजमङ्गनाजने विलोक्य भक्तिं च पुनर्विचारिभिः ।
प्रबुद्धतत्त्वै-स्त्वमभिष्टुतो द्विजै-र्मरुत्पुराधीश निरुन्धि मे गदान् ॥ 10

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! After the Yajna, the true significance of the incident dawned on the minds of these

thoughtful Brahmanas, and they sang Thy praise, realising their own mistakes and recognising the greatness of the devotion evinced by their wives. May Thou assuage my woes!

CANTO 62

BLOCKING SACRIFICE TO INDRA

कदाचिद्गोपालान् विहितमख-सम्भारविभवान्
निरीक्ष्य त्वं शौरे मघवमद-मुध्वंसितुमनाः ।
विजानन्नप्येतान् विनयमृदु नन्दादिपशुपा-
नपृच्छः को वाय जनक भवतामुद्यम इति ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Once on seeing the Gopas engaged in collecting the many requisites needed for a Vedic Yaga in honour of the deity Indra, Thou, intent on humbling the pride of Indra, asked the elders like Nanda in all humility and politeness the reason for such elaborate preparations, notwithstanding Thy awareness of the same fully.

बभाषे नन्दस्त्वां सुत ननु विधेयो मघवतो
मखो वर्षे वर्षे सुखयति स वर्षेण पृथिवीम् ।
नृणां वर्षायत्तं निखिलमुपजीव्यं महितले
विशेषादस्माकं तृणसलिलजीवा हि पशवः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Nanda replied, 'My boy, we are bound to offer a grand sacrifice to Indra every year. For it is he who makes all the world happy by sending rain in time. And rain determines the availability of all necessaries of life for men. Especially is it so for us, as our cattle live on grass and water.'

इति श्रुत्वा वाचं पितुरयि भवानाह सरसं
धि-गेत-न्नो सत्यं मघवजनिता वृष्टिरिति यत् ।
अदृष्टं जीवानां सृजति खलु वृष्टिं समुचितां
महारण्ये वृक्षाः किमिव बलिमिन्द्राय ददते ॥ 3 ॥

3. Hearing these words of Thy father, Thou didst reply with the following sweet and wise words: 'It is not true that Indra is the cause of rain. It is the Adrishta (the unseen efficacy of past action) of living beings that brings rain to them according to their deserts. Do the trees in the vast forests give any offering to Indra?'

इदं तावत् सत्यं यदिह पशवो नः कुलधनं
तदाजीव्यायासौ बलिरचलभर्त्रे समुचितः ।
सुरेभ्योऽप्युत्कृष्टा ननु धरणिदेवाः क्षितितले
ततस्तेऽप्याराध्या इति जगदिथ त्वं निजजनान् ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'That cattle form the wealth of our tribe, is indeed true. Then these offerings meant for securing adequate supplies of grass and water for them deserve to be made to this mountain Govardhana (for it is this mountain that provides these requisites for our animals). And on this earth, holy men are more deserving of worship than Devas like Indra.' Thus didst Thou say to Thy clansmen.

भवद्वाचं श्रुत्वा बहुमतियुतास्तेऽपि पशुपाः
द्विजेन्द्रानर्चन्तो बलिमददुरुच्चैः क्षितिभृते ।
व्यधुः प्रादक्षिण्यं सुभृशमन-मन्नादरयुता-
स्त्वमादः शैलात्मा बलिमखिलमाभीरपुरतः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Hearing Thy words, the Gopas worshipped the holy men with great reverence, and made rich offerings to the mountain, circumambulating it and making reverential prostration, whilst Thou, enlivening the mountain as the soul of it, didst consume all the offerings in their presence.

अवोचश्चैवं तान् किमिह वितथं मे निगदितं
गिरीन्द्रो नन्वेष स्वबलिमुपभुङ्क्ते स्ववपुषा ।
अयं गोत्रो गोत्रद्विषि च कुपिते रक्षितुमलं
समस्तानित्युक्त्वा जहृषुरखिला गोकुलजुषः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thou didst then tell them: 'Don't you see? I was not wrong! This mountain has physically consumed

all our offerings. Even if Indra be angry with us (for depriving him of his due), this mountain is capable of protecting us all and the cattle.' The Gopas were glad to hear these words of Thine.

परिप्रीता याताः खलु भवदुपेता व्रजजुषो
व्रजं यावत्ताव-न्निजमखविभङ्गं निशमयन् ।
भवन्तं जानन्न-प्यधिकरजसाऽऽक्रान्तहृदयो
न सेहे देवेन्द्र-स्त्वदुपरचिता-त्मोन्नतिरपि ॥ 7 ॥

7. After the inhabitants of Vraja had returned to their abode with Thee in a mood of great jubilation, Indra, who heard of the stoppage of the sacrifice that was his due, got enraged in spite of his knowing Thy greatness from the fact that he owed his own high position to Thee.

मनुष्यत्वं यातो मधुभिदपि देवेष्वविनयं
विधत्ते चेन्नष्टस्त्रिदशसदसां कोऽपि महिमा ।
ततश्च ध्वंसिष्ये पशुपहतकस्य श्रियमिति
प्रवृत्तस्त्वां जेतुं स किल मघवा दुर्मदनिधिः ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Insult offered by one of the human species, even if he be Mahavishnu embodied as man, would destroy the generally accepted prestige and status of the Devas. I shall, therefore, destroy all the cows, homesteads and other forms of wealth of this stripling of a cowherd boy and his tribe.' So saying, Indra full of false pride, made up his mind to punish Thee.

त्वदावासं हन्तुं प्रलयजलदा-नम्बरभुवि
प्रहिण्वन् बिभ्राणः कुलिशमयमभ्रेभगमनः ।
प्रतस्थेऽन्यै-रन्तर्दहनमरुदाद्यै-र्विहसितो
भवन्माया नैव त्रिभुवनपते मोहयति कम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. With a view to deluging Thy residence, Indra inducted heavy deluge-causing clouds in the sky, and himself started on his white elephant armed with his weapon of the

thunder-bolt and, followed by other gods like the deities of fire and air, who were, however, laughing within themselves (as they knew very well that Indra would be making a fool of himself). Who is there that cannot be infatuated by Thy Maya, O Lord of all the worlds!

सुरेन्द्रः क्रुद्धश्चेत् द्विजकरुणया शैलकृपया-
प्यनातङ्कोऽस्माकं नियत इति विश्वास्य पशुपान् ।
अहो किंनायातो गिरिभिदिति सञ्चिन्त्य निवसन्
मरुद्गेहाधीश प्रणुद मुरवैरिन् मम गदान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'If Indra is angry with us, we shall certainly be protected by the grace of the holy men and the mountain'. Thou, who didst thus convince the cowherds and wait wondering why Indra had not yet turned up for his reprisal—may Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor and the Destroyer of Mura, be pleased to rid me of my ailments!

CANTO 63

LIFTING GOVARDHANA

ददृशिरे किल तत्क्षणमक्षत-स्तनितजृम्भित-कम्पित-दिक्तटाः ।
सुषमया भवदङ्गतुलां गता व्रजपदोपरि वारिधरास्त्वया ॥ 1 ॥

1. Soon didst Thou sight in the sky above Vraja massive rain clouds, resembling the brilliance of Thy own body in their shining blueness, and heralded by continuous and increasingly threatening peals of thunder that shook the quarters.

विपुलकरकमिश्रै-स्तोयधारानिपातै-
र्दिशि दिशि पशुपानां मण्डले दण्डयमाने ।
कुपितहरिकृतान्नः पाहि पाहीति तेषां
वचनमजित श्रृण्वन् मा बिभीतेत्यभाणीः ॥ 2 ॥

2. When the Gopas everywhere were distressed by torrential rains accompanied with the fall of enormous hailstones, they began to cry aloud for protection from the wrath of Indra. Hearing their laments, Thou didst ask them not to fear.

कुल इह खलु गोत्रो दैवतं गोत्रशत्रो-
र्विहतिमिह स रुन्ध्यात् को नु वः संशयोऽस्मिन्
इति सहसितवादी देवगोवर्धनाद्रि
त्वरितमुदमुमूलो मूलतो बालदोर्भ्याम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. 'This mountain Govardhana (meaning, literally, the protector of cows) is the deity of our Gopa clan (cowherds). He will certainly protect us from the mischief of Indra, the enemy of mountains. Have no doubt about this.' Reassuring them thus with a smiling face, Thou didst uproot the mountain with Thy tiny arms.

तदनु गिरिवरस्य प्रोद्धृतस्यास्य तावत्
सिकतिलमृदुदेशे दूरतो वारितापे ।
परिकर-परिमिश्रान् धेनुगोपानधस्ता-
दुपनिदधदधत्था हस्तपद्मेन शैलम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Then didst Thou hold aloft the mountain with Thy tender arms, gathering underneath it, on its soft and sandy bed that was well protected from rain water, all the Gopas with their belongings and cows.

भवति विधृतशैले बालिकाभि-र्वयस्यै-
रपि विहितविलासं केलिलापादिलोले ।
सविधमिलितधेनू-रेकहस्तेन कण्डू-
यति सति पशुपाला-स्तोषमैषन्त सर्वे ॥ 5 ॥

5. To the great joy of all the cowherds, Thou didst, while holding the mountain up with one hand, engage the boys and girls with pleasing looks and entertaining conversations, and also caress the cows that gathered around Thee.

अतिमहान् गिरिरेष तु वामके करसरोरुहि तं धरते चिरम् ।
किमिदमद्भुत-मद्रिबलं न्विति त्वदवलोकिभि-राकथि गोपकैः ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'This mountain is so huge, yet see how this little boy seems to be holding it up in his left hand for such a long time. What a marvel! Can it be that the mountain has jacked itself up!' Thus prattled many a Gopa witnessing Thy performance (unaware of Thy divinity).

अहह धाष्टर्च-ममुष्य वटोर्गिरिं व्यथितबाहु-रसाववरोपयेत् ।
इति हरिस्त्वयि बद्धविगर्हणो दिवस-सप्तक-मुग्रमवर्षयत् ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'Look at the impudence of this boy! But tired hands will force him to set down the mountain before long.' Slighting Thee thus, Indra continued to pour down heavy rain for seven days and nights.

अचलति त्वयि देव पदात् पदं गलितसर्वजले च घनोत्करे ।
अपहृते मरुता मरुतांपति-स्त्वदभिशङ्कितधीः समुपाद्रवत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Lord! Noting that Thou didst not stir even a bit (standing firm like a mountain) all the time, and also finding that all the clouds, having exhausted their waters, were being scattered by the winds, Indra, the Lord of Devas, withdrew, scared by Thy might.

शममुपेयुषि वर्षभरे तदा पशुपधेनुकुले च विनिर्गते ।
भुवि विभो समुपाहितभूधरः प्रमुदितैः पशुपैः परिरेभिषे ॥ 9 ॥

9. When the rain had thus ceased, and the cowherds and the cows had come out into the open, Thou didst replace the mountain on the ground, and receive the embraces of the overjoyed cowherds.

धरणिमेव पुरा धृतवानसि क्षितिधरोद्धरणे तव कः श्रमः
इति नुतस्त्रिदशैः कमलापते गुरुपुरालय पालय मां गदात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Thou whom the gods in heaven praised, remarking that for one who lifted the whole earth (in his Incarnation as the Divine Boar), the lifting of a mere mountain was child's play—may Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be gracious enough to save me from my ailment!

CANTO 64

CROWNING AS GOVINDA

आलोक्य शैलोद्धरणादिरूपं प्रभावमुच्चैस्तव गोपलोकाः।
विश्वेश्वरं त्वामभिमत्य विश्वे नन्दं भवज्जातक-मन्वपृच्छन् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Witnessing such tremendous feats of Thine as the lifting of Mount Goyardhana, the Gopas, who were inclined to believe that Thou wert the Supreme Being (Mahavishnu) Himself, questioned Nanda about Thy horoscope (in order to get confirmation for their belief).

गर्गोदितो निर्गदितो निजाय वर्गाय तातेन तव प्रभावः।
पूर्वाधिक-स्त्वय्यनुराग एषा-मैधिष्ट तावत् बहुमानभारः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Thy clansmen were informed by Thy father of what sage Garga had prophesied about Thy greatness, and thenceforward, their love and respect for Thee increased manifold.

ततोऽवमानोदित-तत्त्वबोधः सुराधिराजः सह दिव्यगव्या।
उपेत्य तुष्टाव स नष्टगर्वः स्पृष्ट्वा पदाब्जं मणिमौलिना ते ॥

3. Afterwards, Indra, whom defeat and downfall had brought to the realization of the truth about Thee, came to Thee with his celestial cow, and began to sing Thy praise, touching Thy feet with his crowned head.

स्नेहस्नुतैस्त्वां सुरभिः पयोभि-र्गोविन्दनामाङ्कित-मभ्यषिञ्चत्।
ऐरावतोपाहृत-दिव्यगङ्गा-पाथोभिरिन्द्रोऽपि च जातहर्षः ॥ 4 ॥

4. The celestial cow bathed Thee (as in a royal coronation) with milk from her love-swollen udder and thus made Thee famous as Govinda (the Lord of Cows), while Indra bathed Thee in great joy with the holy waters of the heavenly Ganges brought by his celestial white elephant Airavata in his trunk.

जगत्त्रयेशे त्वयि गोकुलेशे तथाऽभिषिक्ते सति गोपवाटः।
नाकेऽपि वैकुण्ठपदेऽप्यलभ्यां श्रियं प्रपेदे भवतः प्रभावात् ॥ 5 ॥

5. When Thou, the master of the universe, wert thus anointed as the 'Lord of Cows' (Govinda), the cowherd settlement attained through Thy majesty to a state of excellence unknown and unheard of in heaven or even in Vaikuntha.

कदाचिदन्तर्यमुनं प्रभाते स्नायन् पिता वारुणपूरुषेण ।
नीतस्तमानेतुमगाः पुरीं त्वां तां वारुणीं कारणमर्त्यरूपः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Once when Thy father was bathing in the Yamuna before dawn (when the time for Asuras to prowl about was not yet past), an emissary of Varuna kidnapped him. In order to get him back, Thou, whose human form was only an assumed one for certain universal ends, proceeded to Varuna's abode.

ससम्भ्रमं तेन जलाधिपेन प्रपूजितस्त्वं प्रतिगृह्य तातम् ।
उपागतस्तत्क्षणमात्मगेहं पिताऽवदत्तच्चरितं निजेभ्यः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Surprised at Thy unexpected appearance, Varuna, the king of the seas, worshipped Thee with great attention, and Thou, with Thy father, didst come back immediately to Thy home. Nanda afterwards informed his clansmen of this occurrence.

हरिं विनिश्चित्य भवन्तमेतान् भवत्पदालोकन-बद्धतृष्णान् ।
निरीक्ष्य विष्णो परमं पदं तद्-दुरापमन्यै-स्त्वमदीदृशस्तान् ॥ 8 ॥

8. These Gopas, now being convinced that Thou wert Hari Himself, became intensely desirous of having a direct experience of Thy Supreme State. So Thou didst reveal to them that State, which men without devotion can never attain.

स्फुरत्परानन्द-रसप्रवाह-प्रपूर्णकैवल्य-महापयोधौ ।
चिरं निमग्नाः खलु गोपसङ्घा-स्त्वयैव भूमन् पुनरुद्धृतास्ते ॥ 9 ॥

9. Attaining to the state of release, long did those of the community of Gopas remain in the Ocean of Sat-chit-ananda, until Thou didst draw them back to the state of worldly consciousness.

करबदरवदेवं देव कुत्रावतारे
परपद-मनवाप्यं दर्शितं भक्तिभाजाम् ।
तदिह पशुपरूपी त्वं हि साक्षात् परात्मान्
पवनपुरनिवासिन् पाहि मामामयेभ्यः ॥ 10 ॥

10. Which other Incarnation has ever revealed to devotees that Supreme State with such ease—as if it were a fruit in one's palm?[18] May Thou, who for this reason revealest Thyself as the veritable Brahman in the form of a cowboy—may Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 65

COMING OF GOPIS FOR RASA-LILA

गोपीजनाय कथितं नियमावसाने मारोत्सवं त्वमथ साधयितुं प्रवृत्तः ।
सान्द्रेण चान्द्रमहसा शिशिरीकृताशे प्रापूरयो मुरलिकां यमुनावनान्ते ॥

1. Now, resolved to grant what Thou hadst promised the Gopikas at the end of their vows, *viz* to engage them in the sport of love, Thou didst, one night, sound Thy flute in the woods on Yamuna's bank bathed in the cool light of the moon.

सम्मूर्छनाभिरुदित-स्वरमण्डलाभिः सम्मूर्छयन्तमखिलं भुवनान्तरालम् ।
त्वद्वेणुनाद-मुपकर्ण्य विभो तरुण्य-स्तत्तादृशं कमपि चित्तविमोहमापुः ॥

2. As the clear and distinct strains of Thy flute with its ascending and descending notes filled all space and absorbed the attention of all, the young women of Vraja were overcome by an unparalleled and inexplicable fascination.

ता गेहकृत्यनिरता-स्तनयप्रसक्ताः कान्तोपसेवनपराश्च सरोरुहाक्ष्यः ।
सर्वं विसृज्य मुरली-रवमोहितास्ते कान्तारदेशमयि कान्ततनो समेताः ॥

3. Captivated by the sound of the flute, these women, who were devoting themselves to their household duties, to the care of their children and to the service of their husbands, abandoned all such chores, and rushed to the woods where Thou, O Charming One, hadst stationed Thyself.

काश्चि-न्निजाङ्गपरिभूषण-मादधाना वेणुप्रणाद-मुपकर्ण्य कृतार्धभूषाः ।
त्वामागता ननु तथैव विभूषिताभ्य-स्ता एव संरुरुचिरे तव लोचनाय ॥

4. Some of them had dressed and decorated themselves in full, while others had gone only half way through their toilet, when they heard the flute and ran to Thee even as they were. To Thy eyes the latter seemed more attractive, (for their devotion was so overpowering as to make them forgetful of their appearance).

हारं नितम्बभुवि काचन धारयन्ती
काञ्चीं च कण्ठभुवि देव समागता त्वाम् ।
हारित्व-मात्मजघनस्य मुकुन्द तुभ्यं
व्यक्तं बभाष इव मुग्धमुखी विशेषात् ॥ 5 ॥

5. One woman had come wearing a necklace (*haram*) round her waist and a waist-band round her neck, as if she was thereby clearly declaring to Thee the attractiveness (*haritwa*) of her hips.

काचित् कुचे पुनरसज्जित-कञ्चुलीका
व्यामोहतः परवधूभि-रलक्ष्यमाणा ।
त्वामाययौ निरुपम-प्रणयातिभार-
राज्याभिषेकविधये कलशीधरेव ॥ 6 ॥

6. Another, wearing ornaments but without any upper garment, and unnoticed by other women in spite of this oddity because of their own excitement, seemed, with her exposed breasts, to be approaching Thee with two pots of water meant to bathe Thee in the ceremony of Thy coronation as the unrivalled emperor of the land of Love.

काश्चित् गृहात् किल निरेतु-मपारयन्त्य-
स्त्वामेव देव हृदये सुदृढं विभाव्य ।
देहं विधूय परचित्-सुखरूपमेकं
त्वामाविशन् परमिमा ननु धन्यधन्याः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Some Gopikas, being unable to come out of their homes (owing to restrictions imposed by their kith and kin), abandoned their bodies in the state of complete absorption in Thee through meditation and got merged in Thee, the non-dual Sat-chid-ananda. These, indeed, were the most fortunate of all!

जारात्मना न परमात्मतया स्मरन्त्यो नार्यो गताः परमहंसगतिं क्षणेन ।
तं त्वां प्रकाशपरमात्मतनुं कथञ्चि-च्चित्ते वहन्नमृत-मश्रममश्नुवीय ॥

8. These women looked upon Thee not as Parabrahman but as their paramour, and yet they attained so soon to that state of liberation, which is the goal of the Paramahamsas.[19] So, through absorption of the mind in Thee, Sri Krishna, the veritable embodiment of Sat-chid-ananda, through any feeling or attitude (be it sex-love, anger, fear, friendliness, affection, servitude, or adoration), I too shall attain to the state of Immortality without much difficulty!

अभ्यागताभिरभितो व्रजसुन्दरीभि-
र्मुग्धस्मितार्द्रवदनः करुणावलोकी ।
निस्सीम-कान्तिजलधि-स्त्वमवेक्ष्यमाणो
विश्वैकहृद्य हर मे पवनेश रोगान् ॥ 8 ॥

9. O Supreme Lord and the Beloved of all the worlds! May Thou, the boundless ocean of splendour, whose face was lit up with a smile and looks full of universal benevolence, whom the assembled Gopikas saw before their eyes—may that Supreme Being rid me of my ailments!

CANTO 66

RASA-LILA

उपयातानां सुदृशां कुसुमायुध-बाणपातविवशानाम् ।
अभिवाञ्छितं विधातुं कृतमतिरपि ता जगाथ वाममिव ॥ 1 ॥

1. Though Thou hadst decided to fulfil the longings of the love-lorn women who had come to Thee, Thou didst at first speak to them in a contrary strain.

गगनगतं मुनिनिवहं श्रावयितुं जगिथ कुलवधूधर्मम् ।
धर्म्यं खलु ते वचनं कर्म तु नो निर्मलस्य विश्वास्यम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. In order that the sages assembled in the heavens might hear (and through them the world might know), Thou didst declare to the Gopikas the duties of chaste and well-bred women. Thy words are always in accordance with Dharma, but Thy actions are not always safe to emulate; for Thou art the ever-pure one[20] (who, being without a self-centred individuality, always dost work only for the good of the worlds, and art therefore unaffected by the effects of such works, which, according to human standards, may look good or bad).

आकर्ण्य ते प्रतीपां वाणीमेणीदृशः परं दीनाः ।
मा मा करुणासिन्धो परित्यजे-त्यतिचिरं विलेपुस्ताः ॥ 3 ॥

3. Hearing Thy unfavourable response, these women were stricken with poignant grief, and pleaded long with Thee, a veritable ocean of mercy, not to reject their suit.

तासां रुदितै-र्लपितैः करुणाकुलमानसो मुरारे त्वम् ।
ताभिः समं प्रवृत्तो यमुनापुलिनेषु काम-मभिरन्तुम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord! Being moved with pity by their weeping and pleading, Thou didst set out to sport freely with them on the sand banks of the Yamuna.

चन्द्रकर-स्यन्दलस-त्सुन्दरयमुनातटा-न्तवीथीषु ।
गोपीजनोत्तरीयै-रापादित-संस्तरो न्यषीदस्त्वम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. On the sands of the Yamuna banks, lit up by the soft rays of the moon, Thou didst take Thy seat on a bed made of (the saffron-stained) upper garments of the Gopikas.

सुमधुरनर्मालपनैः करसंग्रहणैश्च चुम्बनोल्लासैः ।
गाढालिङ्गनसङ्गै-स्त्वमङ्गनालोक-माकुलीचकृषे ॥ 6 ॥

6. By sweet and frolicsome words, by clasping of hands, by kissing, and by hearty embraces, didst Thou fill their minds with ecstatic joy.

वासोहरणदिने यद्वासोहरणं प्रतिश्रुतं तासाम् ।
तदपि विभो रसविवश-स्वान्तानां कान्त-सुभ्रुवामदधाः ॥ 7 ॥

7. What Thou hadst promised them the day Thou snatched away their garments, even that, O Lord Thou didst now perform to satisfy these love-lorn beauties.

कन्दलित-घर्मलेशं कुन्द-मृदुस्मेरवक्त्र-पाथोजम् ।
नन्दसुत त्वां त्रिजगत्सुन्दर-मुपगूह्य नन्दिता बालाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Son of Nanda! Thou ravisher of all the worlds by Thy beauty! These damsels felt thrills of bliss on embracing Thee, whose body was moist through slight perspiration, and whose lotus face was lit up by a smile that revealed the white lustre of Thy jasmine-like teeth.

विरहेष्वङ्गारमयः शृङ्गारमयश्च सङ्गमे हि त्वम् ।
नितरामङ्गारमय-स्तत्र पुनः सङ्गमेऽपि चित्रमिदम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. In separation, devotees feel Thee as *angaramaya* (as burning fire-wood giving intense heat) and in union they experience Thee as *sringaramaya* (as an embodiment of loving sentiment). But wonder of wonders! Here these women found Thee in union too to be more of an *angaramaya*![21] (*anga*! *aramayah*, 'Dear one! Thou didst delight them exceedingly').

राधातुङ्गपयोधर-साधुपरीरम्भ-लोलुपात्मानम् ।
आराधये भवन्तं पवनपुराधीश शमय सकलगदान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! I worship Thee who art engrossed in embracing Radha with her swelling breasts. I pray that Thou mayest be pleased to eradicate my ailments!

CANTO 67

LORD DISAPPEARS AND REAPPEARS

स्फुरत्परानन्द-रसात्मकेन त्वया समासादित-भोगलीला: ।
असीममानन्दभरं प्रपन्ना महान्तमापु-र्मदमम्बुजाक्ष्य: ॥ 1 ॥

1. Engrossed in love sports with Thee, the very embodiment of supreme Brahmic Bliss, and immersed thereby in limitless joy, these women fell victims to great pride and self-importance.

निलीयतेऽसौ मयि मय्यमायं रमापति-र्विश्वमनोभिराम: ।
इति स्म सर्वा: कलिताभिमाना निरीक्ष्य गोविन्द तिरोहितोऽभू: ॥

2. 'Krishna, the Lord of Rema and the paragon of beauty, is in truth dissolved in me out of love (whereas he is only pretending to love the others).' Such thoughts, born of jealousy and self-importance, vitiated the minds of all the Gopikas, and Thou, O Govinda, being aware of this, disappeared from their midst.

राधाभिधां तावदजातगर्वा-मतिप्रियां गोपवधूं मुरारे ।
भवानुपादाय गतो विदूरं तया सह स्वैरविहारकारी ॥ 3 ॥

3. Taking with Thee Radha[22], a Gopika who was (still) free from pride and therefore very dear to Thee, Thou didst move away to a distance and occupy Thyself in love-sports with her.

तिरोहितेऽथ त्वयि जाततापा: समं समेता: कमलायताक्ष्य: ।
वने वने त्वां परिमार्गयन्त्यो विषादमापु-र्भगवन्नपारम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. On Thy disappearance, these Gopikas, all alike in their poignancy of suffering, gathered together and went about searching for Thee from place to place in the forest in utmost grief.

हा चूत हा चम्पक कर्णिकार हा मल्लिके मालति बालवल्यः ।
किं वीक्षितो नो हृदयैकचोर इत्यादि तास्त्वत्प्रवणा विलेपुः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Enquiring of the trees, the creepers and the flowers of the forest whether they had anywhere seen the one who had stolen the hearts of them all, they bemoaned their fate out of intense attachment for Thee.

निरीक्षितोऽयं सखि पङ्कजाक्षः पुरो ममेत्याकुलमालपन्ती ।
त्वां भावनाचक्षुषि वीक्ष्य काचि-त्तापं सखीनां द्विगुणीचकार ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'O friend! I see Krishna before me,' declared a distraught Gopika out of an imaginative perception of Thee, which went only to intensify the grief of them all.

त्वदात्मिकास्ता यमुनातटान्ते तवानुचक्रुः किल चेष्टितानि ।
विचित्य भूयोऽपि तथैव मानात् त्वया वियुक्तां ददृशुश्च राधाम् ॥

7. As they went about identifying themselves in imagination completely with Thee and in that wise enacting the sports of Thy infancy, they saw at one place Radha engaged like themselves in search of Thee, as she too had been abandoned by Thee when pride rose in her heart also.

ततः समं ता विपिने समन्ता-त्तमोवतारावधि मार्गयन्त्यः ।
पुनर्विमिश्रा यमुनातटान्ते भृशं विलेपुश्च जगुर्गुणांस्ते ॥ 8 ॥

8. Then all of them, including Radha, went together in search of Thee up to the dark impenetrable regions of the forest, and afterwards (failing to find Thee) gathered again on the banks of the Yamuna to bemoan their fate and to recount Thy excellences.

तथा व्यथासङ्कुल-मानसानां व्रजाङ्गनानां करुणैकसिन्धो ।
जगत्त्रयीमोहन-मोहनात्मा त्वं प्रादुरासीरयि मन्दहासी ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Ocean of Mercy! O Charmer of even cupid who charms all the worlds! Thou, with Thy smiling face, didst now re-appear before the Gopikas, who were stricken in mind with utmost grief and despair.

सन्दिग्धसन्दर्शन-मात्मकान्तं त्वां वीक्ष्य तन्व्यः सहसा तदानीम् ।
किं किं न चक्रुः प्रणयातिभारात् स त्वं गदात् पालय मारुतेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. Overjoyed at the sudden and unexpected meeting with the beloved one, in what all ways did they not show the intensity of their joy! O Lord of Guruvayoor, who didst thus manifest Thyself before the Gopikas! May Thou deign to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 68

RE-UNION WITH GOPIKAS

तव विलोकनाद्-गोपिकाजनाः प्रमदसङ्कुलाः पङ्कजेक्षण ।
अमृतधारया सम्प्लुता इव स्तिमिततां दधु-स्त्वत्पुरोगताः ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Approaching Thee, the Gopikas stood stupefied, overwhelmed and motionless at Thy sight, as if their spirits were drenched in a downpour of Immortal Bliss.

तदनु काचन त्वत्कराम्बुजं सपदि गृह्णती निर्विशङ्कितम् ।
घनपयोधरे संविधाय सा पुलकसंवृता तस्थुषी चिरम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Then one Gopika suddenly took Thy hands in hers, and laying it on her breast without any hesitation, stood there for long, with all her hairs standing on end.

तव विभोऽपरा कोमलं भुजं निजगलान्तरे पर्यवेष्टयत् ।
गलसमुद्गतं प्राणमारुतं प्रतिनिरुन्धतीवातिहर्षुला ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Lord! Another Gopika, maddened with joy, entwined Thy tender arm round her neck, as if to hold back

her vital breath which she feared might escape through her throat.

अपगतत्रपा कापि कामिनी तव मुखाम्बुजात् पूगचर्वितम्।
प्रतिगृह्य तद्वक्त्रपङ्कजे निदधती गता पूर्णकामताम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. Another love-lorn woman, freed from every trace of shame, took a roll of chewed betel-nut from Thy mouth and put it into hers, attaining thereby the summit of her amorous aspiration.

विकरुणो वने संविहाय मा-मपगतोऽसि का त्वामिह स्पृशेत्।
इति सरोषया तावदेकया सजललोचनं वीक्षितो भवान् ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'Whoever amongst us would even touch Thee who didst so mercilessly desert me in the wilderness!' Thus did one of them exclaim in resentment as she looked at Thee with tearful eyes.

इति मुदाकुलै-र्वल्लवीजनैः सममुपागतो यामुने तटे।
मृदुकुचाम्बरैः कल्पितासने घुसृणभासुरे पर्यशोभथाः ॥ 6 ॥

6. In the company of these Gopikas, with their minds filled with ecstatic joy, Thou didst shine in all Thy glory, whilst Thou didst sit on the heaped up upper garments of the women stained beautifully with saffron from their body.

कतिविधा कृपा केऽपि सर्वतो धृतदयोदयाः केचिदाश्रिते।
कतिचिदीदृशा मादृशेष्वपी-त्यभिहितो भवान् वल्लवीजनैः ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'Dost Thou know how many forms kindness takes? Some are kind to all alike without any distinction. Others are kind to their dependants. There are still others whose kindness is of the nature of Thy response to us, devotees—(a response that is nothing short of utter heartlessness).' Thus did the Gopikas address Thee.

अयि कुमारिका नैव शङ्कयतां कठिनता मयि प्रेमकातरे।
मयि तु चेतसो वोऽनुवृत्तये कृतमिदं मये-त्यूचिवान् भवान् ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'O dear girls! Do not suspect me to be so hard-hearted. I am only concerned that there should be no breach in our love. I disappeared only to render your mind continuously and intensely fixed on Me.' Thus didst Thou reply to them.

अयि निशम्यतां जीववल्लभाः प्रियतमो जनो नेदृशो मम ।
तदिह रम्यतां रम्ययामिनी-ष्वनुपरोधमि-त्यालपो विभो ।। 9 ।।

9. 'O mistresses of my soul! Take it from me that there is none as dear to me as you. We shall therefore sport without hindrance during these delightful moonlit nights (on the banks of the Yamuna).' Thus, O Lord, didst Thou tell them.

इति गिराधिकं मोदमेदुरै-र्व्रजवधूजनैः साकमारमन् ।
कलितकौतुको रासखेलने गुरुपुरीपते पाहि मां गदात् ।। 10 ।।

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! May Thou, who didst declare thus to the immense delight of the Gopikas and enthusiastically engage Thyself in Rasa dance with them—may Thou be pleased to give me relief from my ailments!

CANTO 69

RASA DANCE

केशपाशधृत-पिञ्छिकावितति सञ्चलन्मकरकुण्डलं
हारजाल-वनमालिका-ललित-मङ्गराग-घनसौरभम् ।
पीतचेलधृत-काञ्चिकाञ्चित-मुदञ्चदंशु-मणिनूपुरं
रासकेलिपरिभूषितं तव हि रूपमीश कलयामहे ।। 1 ।।

1. A bunch of peacock feathers adorning the crown; a pair of fish-marked pendants dangling from the ears; innumerable necklaces intermingled with floral wreaths adorning the neck; sandal paste and other unguents smeared over the body and emitting a strong fragrance; a golden girdle hemming the yellow wearing cloth; gem-studded anklets glowing and

jingling—on Thy form radiant with such decorations appropriate for the Rasa dance, we meditate.

तावदेव कृतमण्डने कलितकञ्चुलीक-कुचमण्डले
गण्डलोल-मणिकुण्डले युवति-मण्डलेऽथ परिमण्डले
अन्तरा सकल-सुन्दरीयुगल-मिन्दिरारमण सञ्चरन्
मञ्जुलां तदनु रासकेलिमयि कञ्जनाभ समुपादधाः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Afterwards tying up their brassiers and putting on decorations like tremulous ear rings whose brilliance their cheeks reflected, the Gopikas arrayed themselves into a circle surrounding Thee, and Thou, O Supreme Lord! O Consort of Mahalakshmi! didst then start the Rasa dance, multiplying Thyself into several forms so that each pair in that circle of young women had one Krishna between them (to dance with).

वासुदेव तव भासमानमिह रासकेलिरससौरभं
दूरतोऽपि खलु नारदागदित-माकलय्य कुतुकाकुला ।
वेषभूषण-विलासपेशल-विलासिनी-शतसमावृता
नाकतो युगपदागता वियति वेगतोऽथ सुरमण्डली ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Vasudeva! Hearing from Narada from afar about the sweetness and glory of Thy Rasa dance, the Devas in the company of their numerous womenfolk, distinguished for their expertise in personal decoration and amorous display, hurried in great joy from their heavenly abode and stationed themselves in the sky.

वेणुनादकृत-तानदानकल-गानराग-गतियोजना-
लोभनीय-मृदुपादपातकृत-तालमेलनमनोहरम् ।
पाणिसंक्वणित-कङ्कणञ्च मुहुरंसलम्बित-कराम्बुजं
श्रोणिबिम्ब-चलदम्बरं भजत रासकेलि-रसडम्बरम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. The key-note set by the loud and clear sound of Thy flute, the sweet singing of the Gopikas in unison with the same, the rhythmic and soft strokes of the feet in consonance with the musical mode, the clapping sound of the hands mingled with the tinkling of the bangles worn on them, the resting of

hands by the dancers on each other's shoulders, and the fluttering of the cloths worn round the waist—on these enthralling majesties of the Rasa dance, let us meditate!

श्रद्धया विरचितानुगानकृत-तारतार-मधुरस्वरे
नर्तनेऽथ ललिताङ्गहार-लुलिताङ्गहार-मणिभूषणे ।
सम्मदेन कृतपुष्पवर्ष-मलमुन्मिष-द्दिविषदां कुलं
चिन्मये त्वयि निलीयमानमिव सम्मुमोह सवधूकुलम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. The sweet notes of the music reached higher and higher pitches as the singers raised their voice in successive strains with deep concentration. The delightful movements of their limbs threw the garlands and ornaments of the dancers into disarray. And the Devas and their wives, who watched the scene from above with rapturous joy showered flowers and stood thrilled and entranced with wide open eyes, as if they had got absorbed in Thee who art of the nature of Sat-chid-ananda.

स्विन्नसन्न-तनुवल्लरी तदनु कापि नाम पशुपाङ्गना
कान्तमंस-मवलम्बते स्म तव तान्तिभार-मुकुलेक्षणा ।
काचिदाचलित-कुन्तला नवपटीरसार-घनसौरभं
वञ्चनेन तव सञ्चुचुम्ब भुज-मञ्चितोरु-पुलकाङ्कुरम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Presently one Gopika, slender and delicate like a creeper, her body perspiring and eyelids drooping in exhaustion, sought rest on Thy well-formed shoulder, while another with dishevelled hair grasped Thy arms, fragrant with newly applied sandal paste, apparently to enjoy its smell, but really to kiss it stealthily, the hairs on her own limbs standing on end in the process.

कापि गण्डभुवि सन्निधाय निजगण्ड-माकुलितकुण्डलं
पुण्यपूरनिधि-रन्ववाप तव पूगचर्वित-रसामृतम् ।
इन्दिराविहृति-मन्दिरं भुवन-सुन्दरं हि नटनान्तरे
त्वामवाप्य दधुरङ्गनाः किमु न सम्मदोन्मद-दशान्तरम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Another fortunate woman pressed her cheeks on Thine until the ear-rings were displaced, and enjoyed the thrill of tasting the nectarine juice of chewed betel from Thy mouth. Having obtained Thee, the playfield of Lakshmi and the world's unparalleled beauty, as their dancing partner, what frenzy of joy did these women fail to attain!

गानमीश विरतं क्रमेण किल वाद्यमेलन-मुपारतं
ब्रह्मसम्मद-रसाकुला: सदसि केवलं ननृतुरङ्गना: ।
नाविदन्नपि च नीविकां किमपि कुन्तलीमपि च कञ्चुलीं
ज्योतिषामपि कदम्बकं दिवि विलम्बितं किमपरं ब्रुवे ॥ 8 ॥

8. The singing stopped, the sound of instruments also gradually ceased. But immersed in the Bliss of Brahman, the Gopikas continued to dance silently in that circle of dancers without accompaniments. Nor were they aware that their wearing cloth and brassières had slipped, and that their hair had got loose and dishevelled. Even the stars in their courses seemed to stop (to enjoy the blissful experience)! What more can I say!

मोदसीम्नि भुवनं विलाप्य विहृतिं समाप्य च ततो विभो
केलिसम्मृदित-निर्मलाङ्ग-नवघर्मलेश-सुभगात्मनाम् ।
मन्मथासहन-चेतसां पशुपयोषितां सुकृतचोदित-
स्तावदाकलित-मूर्तिरादधिथ मारवीर-परमोत्सवान् ॥ 9 ॥

9. As the dance ended, the whole world was flooded with Brahmic bliss; and Thou, as if prompted by the meritorious Karma of these Gopikas, didst now assume as many forms as they were in number, and enact a veritable festivity of Cupid with these women who were intensely love-lorn and whose bodies, decked with fresh perspiration from the exertion of the dance, glowed with a new loveliness.

केलिभेद-परिलोलिताभि-रतिलालिताभि-रबलालिभि:
स्वैरमीश ननु सूरजापयसि चारु नाम विहृतिं व्यधा: ।
काननेऽपि च विसारि-शीतल-किशोरमारुतमनोहरे
सूनसौरभमये विलेसिथ विलासिनीशत-विमोहनम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Accompanied by this concourse of women, caressed in diverse ways and exhausted by love sports, Thou didst now play with them freely in the waters of the Yamuna, as also in the forest with its cool and gentle breeze and fragrant flowers, dazing the women with ecstatic joy.

कामिनीरिति हि यामिनीषु खलु कामनीयकनिधे भवान्
पूर्णसम्मद-रसार्णवं कमपि योगिगम्य-मनुभावयन् ।
ब्रह्मशङ्कर-मुखानपीह पशुपाङ्गनासु बहुमानयन्
भक्तलोक-गमनीयरूप कमनीय कृष्ण परिपाहि माम् ।। 11 ।।

11. O Treasure-house of Beauty! Thou who thus didst during nights confer on the love-lorn Gopikas that same immense and intense joy of the Spirit which only Yogis attain, and thereby didst make them respect-worthy even for Brahma and Siva—may Thou, O Krishna of lovely form accessible only to men endowed with devotion, be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 70

SALVATION OF SUDARSANA

इति त्वयि रसाकुलं रमितवल्लभे वल्लवा:
कदापि पुरमम्बिकाकमितु-रम्बिकाकानने ।
समेत्य भवता समं निशि निषेव्य दिव्योत्सवं
सुखं सुषुपु-रग्रसीद्-व्रजप-मुग्रनागस्तदा ।। 1 ।।

1. Once, whilst Thy entertainment of the Gopikas was progressing, all the inhabitants of Gokula went along with Thee to Ambika forest for worshipping Siva. After participating in the festivities connected with the worship, when the Gopas were fast asleep at night, a huge serpent began to swallow Nanda, their leader.

समुन्मुख-मथोल्मुकै-रभिहतेऽपि तस्मिन् बला-
दमुञ्चति भवत्पदे न्यपति पाहि पाहीति तैः ।
तदा खलु पदा भवान् समुपगम्य पस्पर्श तं
बभौ स च निजां तनुं समुपसाद्य वैद्याधरीम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Though thrashed with burning pieces of firewood, the serpent did not release its hold. So the Gopas took shelter at Thy feet for protection. Thou, approaching the snake that was engrossed in swallowing its prey, didst but touch it with Thy feet, whereupon (freed from sins) it assumed its former form of a Vidyadhara.

सुदर्शनधर प्रभो ननु सुदर्शनाख्योऽस्म्यहं
मुनीन् क्वचिदपाहसं त इह मां व्यधुर्वाहसम् ।
भवत्पदसमर्पणा-दमलतां गतोऽस्मीत्यसौ
स्तुवन् निजपदं ययौ व्रजपदं च गोपा मुदा ॥ ३ ॥

3. 'O Lord who wields the discus Sudarsana! I am a Gandharva by name Sudarsana, who, for the sin of ridiculing some sages, was cursed by them to remain here as a python.' Saying so and praising Thee for ridding him of his sins by the contact of Thy feet, he went to his celestial abode, while the Gopas returned home relieved.

कदापि खलु सीरिणा विहरति त्वयि स्त्रीजनै-
र्जहार धनदानुगः स किल शङ्खचूडोऽबलाः ।
अतिद्रुत-मनुद्रुतस्तमथ मुक्तनारीजनं
रुरोजिथ शिरोमणिं हलभृते च तस्याददाः ॥ 4 ॥

4. One day, whilst Thou went sporting with women in Balarama's company, Sankhachuda (lit. one with a conch-like pearl in his crest), an emissary of Kubera, kidnapped some of the women. Thereupon Thou didst follow the thief, kill him, liberate the women, and present the pearl from his head to Thy brother Balarama.

दिनेषु च सुहृज्जनैः सह वनेषु लीलापरं
मनोभवमनोहरं रसितवेणुनादामृतम्
भवन्तममरीदृशा-ममृतपारणादायिनं
विचिन्त्य किमु नालपन् विरहतापिता गोपिकाः ।। 5 ।।

5. The Gopikas indulged in a variety of lamentations on account of their separation from Thee during the day time, as Thou sported all day long with Thy boy-mates in the forest, enchanting the mind of even Cupid by Thy charm, providing the enjoyment of Thy beauty to the eyes of heavenly damsels—Thyself being absorbed in the sweet strains of Thy flute.

भोजराजभृतकस्त्वथ कश्चित् कष्टदुष्टपथदृष्टिररिष्टः ।
निष्टुराकृति-रपष्ठुनिनाद-स्तिष्ठते स्म भवते वृषरूपी ।। 6 ।।

6. One day Thou didst notice before Thee an emissary of Kamsa by name Arishta, a cruel plotter by nature, in the disguise of a bull, terrific in appearance and deafening the world by his bellows.

शाक्वरोऽथ जगतीधृतिहारी मूर्तिमेष बृहतीं प्रदधानः ।
पङ्क्तिमाशु परिघूर्ण्य पशूनां छन्दसां निधिमवाप भवन्तम् ।। 7 ।।

7. In the form of the mighty bull (*sakvari*), huge in appearance (*brihati*) and depriving people (*jagati*) of their courage (*dhriti*), the Asura scattered the herd (*pangti*) of cows and approached Thee, the source of all the Vedas (*chandasam nidhi*). [The Sanskrit words put in brackets are the names of some Vedic metres (*chandas*), and the verse, which is an example of the figure of speech Mudra, also means by implication: The Asura who was the master of the few Vedic metres mentioned, came to defeat Thee who art the source of all Vedic metres].

तुङ्गशृङ्ग-मुखमाश्वभियन्तं संगृह्य रभसादभियं तम् ।
भद्ररूपमपि दैत्यमभद्रं मर्दयन्नमदयः सुरलोकम् ।। 8 ।।

8. Thou didst give great joy to the gods in heaven by catching and crushing to death that Asura who had an auspicious form but a most inauspicious nature (alternatively:

who had the form of a bull but was not really a bull) and who rapidly approached to kill Thee with his high horns.

चित्रमद्य भगवन् वृषघातात् सुस्थिराऽजनि वृषस्थितिरुर्व्याम् ।
वर्धते च वृषचेतसि भूयान् मोद इत्यभिनुतोऽसि सुरैस्त्वम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'O Lord! It is amazing that by the destruction of *vrisha* (bull), Thou didst strengthen *vrisha* (Dharma, or righteousness) in this world, and thereby enhance the joy of the *vrishas* (Indra, as also good men following Dharma).' Thus did the Devas sing Thy praise.

औक्षकाणि परिधावत दूरं वीक्ष्यतामय-मिहोक्षविभेदी ।
इत्थमात्तहसितैः सह गोपैर्गेहगस्त्वमव वातपुरेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. 'O Cows (*Aukshakani*)! Run for your lives. For here is a destroyer of oxen (*Ukshavibhedi*)!' O Lord, with the Gopas thus joking at Thee (alluding to the above incident), Thou didst return home. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Be gracious enough to save me!

CANTO 71

KRISHNA BECOMES KESAVA

यत्नेषु सर्वेष्वपि नावकेशी केशी स भोजेशितुरिष्टबन्धुः ।
त्वं सिन्धुजाऽवाप्य इतीव मत्वा सम्प्राप्तवान् सिन्धुजवाजिरूपः ॥

1. Kesi, a close ally of Kamsa, who was never an *avakesi* (slack) in achieving his ends, one day approached Thee in the form of a horse, considering that Thou, being Mahavishnu Himself, wert easily approachable to *Sindhuja* (a pun on the word which means both 'Mahalakshmi, consort of Vishnu, who was born of Sindhu or ocean,' as also 'a horse from the land of Sindhu').

गन्धर्वतामेष गतोऽपि रूक्षै-र्नादैः समुद्वेचित-सर्वलोकः ।
भवद्विलोकावधि गोपवाटीं प्रमर्द्य पापः पुनरापतत्त्वाम् ॥ २ ॥

2. Though he had assumed the form of a Gandharva (meaning both a 'horse' and 'a celestial singer'), his voice was terrifying enough to frighten all the worlds, and the wicked fellow, after spreading destruction in the Gopa settlement, attacked Thee.

ताक्ष्यार्पिताङ्घ्रेस्तव ताक्ष्यं एष चिक्षेप वक्षोभुवि नाम पादम् ।
भृगोः पदाघातकथां निशम्य स्वेनापि शक्यं तदितीव मोहात् ॥

3. Thou whose legs rest on *Tarkshya* (Garuda), Thy vehicle, was kicked in the chest by this *Tarkshya* (horse), as if, hearing about the story of sage Bhrigu, he was under the delusion that he could kick Thee with impunity even like that sage.

प्रवञ्चयन्नस्य खुराञ्चलं द्रा-गमुं च चिक्षेपिथ दूरदूरम् ।
सम्मूर्च्छितोऽपि ह्यतिमूर्च्छितेन क्रोधोष्मणा खादितु-माद्रुतस्त्वाम् ॥

4. Parrying the kick of his raised legs, Thou didst throw him to a great distance. Though he swooned for a moment, he rushed at Thee again, afire with rage to consume Thee.

त्वं वाहदण्डे कृतधीश्च बाहा-दण्डं न्यधास्तस्य मुखे तदानीम् ।
तद्वृद्धिरुद्धश्वसनो गतासुः सप्तीभवन्नप्यय-मैक्यमागात् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Having decided to kill the horse (*vahadanda*), Thou didst introduce Thy arms, stout like a club (*bahadanda*), into its mouth, and as the arm swelled in size, the Asura, disguised as a horse (*saptibhavan*, also meaning 'having become *seven*'), got strangled and attained to *oneness* (*aikyam*) in Thee.

आलम्भमात्रेण पशोः सुराणां प्रसादके नूत्न इवाश्वमेधे ।
कृते त्वया हर्षवशात् सुरेन्द्रा-स्त्वां तुष्टुवुः केशवनामधेयम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. This looked like a new form of *Aswamedha* (horse sacrifice) in which the Devas got pleased by the mere killing of the sacrificial animal (unlike in the usual horse sacrifice, where the sacrificial horse should have gone on a victorious round all over the country before being sacrificed and after

that its bodily parts should be offered in the sacrificial fire). Being thus delighted with the destruction of Kesi, the gods hailed Thee with the name Kesava (the killer of Kesi).

कंसाय ते शौरिसुतत्वमुक्त्वा तं तद्वधोत्कं प्रतिरुध्य वाचा ।
प्राप्तेन केशिक्षपणावसाने श्रीनारदेन त्वमभिष्टुतोऽभूः ॥ 7 ॥

7. Sage Narada had one day informed Kamsa that Thou wert the son of Vasudeva, whereupon Kamsa was about to kill the latter, but was dissuaded from doing so by Narada. Subsequently Kesi was sent to destroy Thee, and on his being killed, sage Narada met Thee and sang Thy praise.

कदापि गोपैः सह काननान्ते निलायनक्रीडनलोलुपं त्वाम् ।
मयात्मजः प्राप दुरन्तमायो व्योमाभिधो व्योमचरोपरोधी ॥ 8 ॥

8. One day while Thou wert playing hide and seek with the Gopa boys in the forest, Maya's son Vyoma, an Asura of immense magical powers and of inveterate hatred towards the Devas, approached Thee (in disguise).

स चोरपालायितवल्लवेषु चोरायितो गोपशिशून् पशूंश्च ।
गुहासु कृत्वा पिदधे शिलाभि-स्त्वया च बुद्ध्वा परिमर्दितोऽभूत् ॥

9. In a game of thieves and policemen, the Asura played the part of a thief, and (in the course of the game) began to confine the cowherd boys and cows in mountain caves and seal them with slabs of stone. Coming to know of this, Thou didst bring about his destruction.

एवं विधैश्चाद्भुतकेलिभेदै-रानन्दमूर्च्छामतुलां व्रजस्य ।
पदे पदे नूतनयन्नसीमं परात्मरूपिन् पवनेश पायाः ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Supreme Being! O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who didst enhance the intensity of joy of the inhabitants of Vraja through endless variations of Thy playful activities, giving them a novelty at every turn—may Thou be pleased to save me!

CANTO 72

AKRURA'S MISSION TO GOKULA

कंसोऽथ नारदगिरा व्रजवासिनं त्वा-माकर्ण्य दीर्णहृदयः स हि गान्दिनेयम् ।
आहूय कार्मुकमखच्छलतो भवन्त-मानेतुमेनमहिनो-दहिनाथशायिन् ॥

1. O Lord resting on the Serpent Bed! Knowing from Narada that it was Mahavishnu Himself that was dwelling in Vraja as Thou, Kamsa, with a heart rent by fear, sent Akrura, the son of Gandini, to bring Thee under the pretext of an invitation to witness a sacrificial festival consisting in the worship of a special bow.

अक्रूर एष भवदंघ्रिपरश्चिराय त्वद्दर्शनाक्षममनाः क्षितिपालभीत्या ।
तस्याज्ञयैव पुनरीक्षितु-मुद्यतस्त्वामानन्दभार-मतिभूरितरं बभार ॥

2. Akrura, a devotee of Thine, who to his great disappointment could not meet Thee till then owing to fear of Kamsa, was now filled with joy when the king himself sent him to meet Thee.

सोऽयं रथेन सुकृती भवतो निवासं
गच्छन् मनोरथगणांस्त्वयि धार्यमाणान् ।
आस्वादयन् मुहुरपायभयेन दैवं
सम्प्रार्थयन् पथि न किञ्चिदपि व्यजानत् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Akrura, blessed that he was, remained completely oblivious of everything except Thee, as he travelled in a chariot to Thy abode, his mind fondly revolving over his hopes and expectations about Thee, and praying for the removal of all possible obstructions in the way of his meeting Thee (he being the emissary of Thy enemy Kamsa).

द्रक्ष्यामि वेदशतगीतगतिं पुमांसं
स्प्रक्ष्यामि किंस्विदपि नाम परिष्वजेयम् ।
किं वक्ष्यते स खलु मां क्वनु वीक्षितः स्या-
दित्थं निनाय स भवन्मयमेव मार्गम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'Shall I be blessed enough to meet the Great One who is hailed by numerous Vedic hymns? Shall I be able to touch Him, to embrace Him? Will He converse with me? In which part of Gokula shall I meet Him?' With such thoughts he travelled, his mind fully engrossed in Thee.

भूयः क्रमादभिविशन् भवदंघ्रिपूतं वृन्दावनं हरविरिञ्च-सुराभिवन्द्यम् ।
आनन्दमग्न इव लग्न इव प्रमोहे किं किं दशान्तरमवाप न पङ्कजाक्ष ॥

5. O Lord! As he entered Vrindavana sanctified by Thy feet and worthy of adoration even by Brahma and Siva, what depths of ecstatic joy did he not sound! What states of spiritual absorption did he not attain!

पश्यन्नवन्दत भवद्विहृतिस्थलानि पांसुष्ववेष्टत भवच्चरणाङ्कितेषु ।
किं ब्रूमहे बहुजना हि तदापि जाता एवं तु भक्तितरला विरलाः परात्मन् ॥

6. Coming to the places where Thou hadst sported, he made prostrations, and in the dust imprinted by Thy feet he rolled round and round. Oh! his state is beyond my powers of description! Many were the great devotees born in those days, but few, O Lord, evinced such devotional ardour as Akrura!

सायं स गोपभवनानि भवच्चरित्र-
गीतामृतप्रसृत-कर्णरसायनानि ।
पश्यन् प्रमोदसरितेव किलोह्यमानो
गच्छन् भवद्भवनसन्निधि-मन्वयासीत् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Passing the houses of Gopas whence flowed soothing strains of hymns in praise of Thy achievements, Akrura reached Thy residence by dusk, wafted automatically, as it were, by the current of that river of spiritual joy in which he was caught.

तावद्ददर्श पशुदोह-विलोकलोलं भक्तोत्तमागतिमिव प्रतिपालयन्तम् ।
भूमन् भवन्त-मयमग्रजवन्तमन्त-र्ब्रह्मानुभूतिरस-सिन्धुमिवो-द्वमन्तम् ॥

8. O All-pervading Being! As Akrura saw Thee there with Thy brother Balarama watching with deep interest the milking of the cows, it looked as if Thou wert awaiting the

arrival of a great devotee (Akrura himself). It seemed that Thou wert verily the external manifestation of the Brahmic bliss with which that devotee's mind was overflowing.

सायन्तनाप्लव-विशेषविविक्त-गात्रौ द्वौ पीतनीलरुचिराम्बर-लोभनीयौ।
नातिप्रपञ्चधृत-भूषणचारुवेषौ मन्दस्मितार्द्रवदनौ स युवां ददर्श ॥

9. He saw Thee and Balarama, both charming with smiling faces, neat and tidy after the evening bath, wearing clothes of yellow and blue and attractively decorated, though it be with a few ornaments only.

दूराद्रथात्समवरुह्य नमन्तमेन-
मुत्थाप्य भक्तकुलमौलि-मथोपगूहन् ।
हर्षान्मिताक्षरगिरा कुशलानुयोगी
पाणिं प्रगृह्य सबलोऽथ गृहं निनेथ ॥ 10 ॥

10. That best of devotees (Akrura), who had got down from the chariot even at a distance, prostrated himself before Thee and was raised and embraced by Thee in great joy. Then, making enquiries about his welfare with a few words, Thou with Balarama didst lead him by the hand into the house.

नन्देन साकममितादर-मर्चयित्वा तं यादवं तदुदितां निशमय्य वार्ताम् ।
गोपेषु भूपतिनिदेशकथां निवेद्य नानाकथाभिरिह तेन निशामनैषीः ॥

11. After honouring that member of the Yadu clan in every possible way, Thou, along with Nanda, didst listen to what he had to say of his mission, and then communicate to the Gopas the order of King Kamsa sent through Akrura (that they should attend the festival of bow worship). That night Thou didst spend with him conversing on various matters.

चन्द्रागृहे किमुत चन्द्रभगागृहे नु
राधागृहे नु भवने किमु मैत्रविन्दे ।
धूर्तो विलम्बत इति प्रमदाभिरुच्चै-
राशङ्कितो निशि मरुत्पुरनाथ पायाः ॥ 12 ॥

12. 'Why is he delaying to meet us? Unfaithful as he is, he may be tarrying in the house of Chandra or Chandrabhaga, Radha or Mitravinda (particularly dear to him).' Thou, about whom such strong suspicions were expressed by the Gopikas on Thy failure to meet them that night—may Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 73

JOURNEY TO MATHURA

निशमय्य तवाथ यानवार्तां भृशमार्ताः पशुपालबालिकास्ताः ।
किमिदं किमिदं कथं न्वितीमाः समवेताः परिदेवितान्यकुर्वन् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Later, learning about Thy impending departure (to Mathura along with Akrura), the Gopikas gathered together in great consternation and sorrow, and began to bemoan their fate.

करुणानिधिरेष नन्दसूनुः कथमस्मान् विसृजे-दनन्यनाथाः ।
बत नः किमु दैवमेवमासी-दिति तास्त्वद्गतमानसा विलेपुः ॥ 2 ॥

2. 'How is it that Nanda's son, the very ocean of mercy, is deserting us who have no support in life except him. Alas! it seems to be a decree of fate.' Thus did they weep with their hearts fixed on Thee.

चरमप्रहरे प्रतिष्ठमानः सह पित्रा निजमित्रमण्डलैश्च ।
परितापभरं नितम्बिनीनां शमयिष्यन् व्यमुचः सखायमेकम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Towards the close of the last watch of the night, Thou didst get ready to start with Nanda and a large group of Gopa friends, after sending a companion to the Gopikas to assuage their grief.

अचिरादुपयामि सन्निधिं वो भविता साधु मयैव सङ्गमश्रीः ।
अमृताम्बुनिधौ निमज्जयिष्ये द्रुतमित्याश्वसिता वधूरकार्षीः ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'I shall come back to you soon, and you will have plenty of opportunity to have my company. I shall then immerse you in the highest Bliss.' Thus didst Thou console these women.

सविषादभरं सयाच्ञमुच्चै-रतिदूरं वनिताभिरीक्ष्यमाणः ।
मृदु तद्दिशि पातयन्नपाङ्गान् सबलोऽक्रूररथेन निर्गतोऽभूः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Pursued up to a long distance by the sad and piteously entreating gaze of these women and casting a soft, side-long glance at them, Thou together with Balarama didst travel in the chariot of Akrura.

अनसा बहुलेन वल्लवानां मनसा चानुगतोऽथ वल्लभानाम् ।
वनमार्तमृगं विषण्णवृक्षं समतीतो यमुनातटीमयासीः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Followed by the numerous carts (*anasaa*) of the Gopas as also by the thoughts (*manasaa*) of the Gopikas, Thou didst travel on, leaving behind the animals and trees of the forset stricken with grief at Thy departure, and reach the banks of the Yamuna.

नियमाय निमज्य वारिणि त्वा-मभिवीक्ष्याथ रथेऽपि गान्दिनेयः ।
विवशोऽजनि किन्विदं विभोस्ते ननु चित्रं त्ववलोकनं समन्तात् ॥

7. Akrura, the son of Gandini, while bathing in the Yamuna for his morning rites, had a vision of Thee inside the waters, and saw Thee also seated in the chariot at the same time. He was overwhelmed with surprise at this, Thy simultaneous presence in two places, but, O All-pervading One, is there anything really surprising in experiencing Thee everywhere?

पुनरेष निमज्य पुण्यशाली पुरुषं त्वां परमं भुजङ्गभोगे ।
अरिकम्बुगदाम्बुजैः स्फुरन्तं सुरसिद्धौघपरीतमालुलोके ॥ 8 ॥

8. When he again submerged himself in water, the fortunate man that he was, he saw Thee, the Supreme Purusha, resting on the serpent-bed constituted of Adisesha, and shining with Thy divine weapons and insignias like the discus,

conch, mace and lotus in Thy hands, and surrounded by gods and celestial singers on all sides.

स तदा परमात्मसौख्यसिन्धौ विनिमग्नः प्रणुवन् प्रकारभेदैः ।
अविलोक्य पुनश्च हर्षसिन्धो-रनुवृत्या पुलकावृतो ययौ त्वाम् ।।

9. Immersed in the Bliss of Supreme Brahman, he praised Thee with hymns in both Thy aspects—as the supreme loving Person (Saguna) and as the Infinite and Absolute Being (Nirguna). Even after Thy vision disappeared, the experience of unlimited Bliss continued within him, and in that state, with all his hair standing on end, he came back to Thee.

किमु शीतलिमा महान् जले यत् पुलकोऽसाविति चोदितेन तेन ।
अतिहर्षनिरुत्तरेण सार्धं रथवासी पवनेश पाहि मां त्वम् ।। 10 ।।

10. 'Was it so cold in the water that all your hair is standing on end?' Thus didst Thou enquire of him (as if in ignorance of the cause). O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who didst then get into the chariot along with Akrura, who, being overjoyed with bliss, remained mute to the above enquiry—may Thou be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 74

ENTRY INTO MATHURA

सम्प्राप्तो मथुरां दिनार्धविगमे तत्रान्तरस्मिन् वस-
न्नारामे विहिताशनः सखिजनै-र्यातः पुरीमीक्षितुम् ।
प्रापो राजपथं चिरश्रुतिधृत-व्यालोककौतूहल-
स्त्रीपुंसोद्यद-गण्यपुण्यनिगलै-राकृष्यमाणो नु किम् ।। 1 ।।

1. Having reached Mathura by midday and taken Thy lunch in a garden on the outskirts of the city, Thou, accompanied by Thy companions, didst start out to see the city.

Thou didst step on to the main highway, as if drawn by the chain forged by the immense body of meritorious acts of the citizens of Mathura, both men and women, who had till then only heard of Thee in spite of their being very anxious to see Thee in person.

त्वत्पादद्युतिवत् सरागसुभगा-स्त्वन्मूर्तिव-द्योषितः
सम्प्राप्ता विलसत्पयोधररुचो लोला भवद्दृष्टिवत् ।
हारिण्य-स्त्वदुरस्थलीवदयि ते मन्दस्मितप्रौढिव-
न्नैर्मल्योल्लसिताः कचौघरुचिव-द्राजत्कलापाश्रिताः ॥ २ ॥

2. The large numbers of women who gathered to see Thee, resembled Thee in various respects: just as Thy glowing feet were *ragasubhaga* (beautiful with reddish tinge), they were also *ragasubhaga* (radiant with expressions of love); just as Thy body was *payodhararucha* (of the brilliant colour of blue rain cloud), they were also *payodhararucha* (handsome with their shapely breasts); just as Thy eyes were *lola* (tremulous), they were also *lola* (extremely desirious of seeing Thee); just as Thy chest was *harinya* (covered with garlands), they also were *harinya* (extremely attractive to the heart); just as Thy majestic smile was *nairmalyollasita* (attractive by its innocence), they also were *nairmalyollasita* (attractive by their internal and external purity); just as Thy crown of hair was *kalapasrita* (having peacock feathers tucked in), they also were *kalapasrita* (adorned with various ornaments in their tresses).

तासामाकलय-न्नपाङ्गवलनै-र्मोदं प्रहर्षाद्भुत-
व्यालोलेषु जनेषु तत्र रजकं कञ्चित् पटीं प्रार्थयन् ।
कस्ते दास्यति राजकीयवसनं याहीति तेनोदितः
सद्यस्तस्य करेण शीर्षमहृथाः सोऽप्याप पुण्यां गतिम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. Gladdening the women by Thy side-long glances and swaying the populace with joy and wonder (generated by Thy reputation), Thou didst (in the course of Thy movement in the city) ask of a washerman some good clothes, whereupon he sneered at Thee "Begone! Who will give you royal robes?" Thou didst then strike off his head, giving him salvation thereby.

भूयो वायक-मेकमायतमतिं तोषेण वेषोचितं
दाश्वांसं स्वपदं निनेथ सुकृतं को वेद जीवात्मनाम् ।
मालाभिः स्तबकैः स्तवैरपि पुनर्मालाकृता मानितो
भक्तिं तेन वृतां दिदेशिथ परां लक्ष्मीं च लक्ष्मीपते ॥ 4 ॥

4. Next Thou didst confer liberation of Salokya form (attainment of Vaikuntha) on a thoughtful tailor who had the intelligence to present Thee suitable robes whole-heartedly. Who (except Thou) could fathom the merits of a Jiva! Another man, a garland-maker, who honoured Thee with garlands, bouquets and hymns of praise, was also blessed by Thee with devotion for which he prayed, as also with abundance of wealth in addition.

कुब्जामब्जविलोचनां पथि पुनर्दृष्ट्वाङ्गरागे तया
दत्ते साधु किलाङ्गराग-मददा-स्तस्या महान्तं हृदि
चित्तस्थामृजुतामथ प्रथयितुं गात्रेऽपि तस्याः स्फुटं
गृह्णन् मञ्जु करेण तामुदनय-स्तावज्जगत्सुन्दरीम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Next Thou didst meet on the road a woman with a handsome face but hunch-backed, who provided Thee with sandal paste and other unguents (*angaraga*), and in return Thou didst bestow on her intense love for Thee (*angaraga*). In order that her straight-forward inner nature might be reflected in her outer appearance also, Thou didst with a gentle pull of Thy hand straighten her curved form, thereby transforming her into a celebrated beauty.

तावन्निश्चितवैभवास्तव विभो नात्यन्तपापा जना
यत्किञ्चिद्ददते स्म शक्त्यनुगुणं ताम्बूलमाल्यादिकम् ।
गृह्णानः कुसुमादि-किञ्चन तदा मार्गे निबद्धाञ्जलि-
र्नातिष्ठं बत हा यतोऽद्य विपुला-मार्तिं व्रजामि प्रभो ॥ 6 ॥

6. O All-pervading Being! All those who were not too sinful by nature and so could recognise Thy greatness, presented Thee with flowers, betels or whatever else they could afford. But alas! the wretch that I am, I could not stand

by the road-side at that time holding my hands in salutation and offer Thee at least a few flowers, for which lapse, O Lord, I am now suffering from intense pain.

एष्यामीति विमुक्तयापि भगवन्नालेपदात्र्या तया
दूरात् कातरया निरीक्षितगतिस्त्वं प्राविशो गोपुरम् ।
आघोषानुमित-त्वदागम-महाहर्षो-ल्ललद्देवकी-
वक्षोजप्रगल-त्पयोरसमिषा-त्त्वत्कीर्ति-रन्तर्गता ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Lord! Sending away the unguent-donor (who was deeply in love with Thee) with the promise of a subsequent visit, Thou didst enter the outer gate of the city, watched longingly by that woman as far as her eyes could reach. But Thy entry had, however, been preceded by the luminous white flood of Thy fame in the guise of Thy mother Devaki's breast milk, the flow of which had been stimulated by her maternal affection on sensing Thy approach from the welcoming shout of the joyous populace.

आविष्टो नगरीं महोत्सववतीं कोदण्डशालां व्रजन्
माधुर्येण नु तेजसा नु पुरुषैर्दूरेण दत्तान्तरः ।
स्त्रग्भिर्भूषितमर्चितं वरधनु-र्मामेति वादात् पुरः
प्राग्गृह्णाः समरोपयः किल समाक्राक्षी-रभाङ्क्षीरपि ॥ 8 ॥

8. On Thy entering the festive city, all people including the guards, stood aside at a distance and gave Thee passage wonderstruck, maybe by the beauty of Thy form or maybe by the majesty of it. Thou didst then make Thy way to the hall where the great bow lay worshipped and decorated with flowers. Before its caretakers could remonstrate (at Thy unauthorised entry), Thou didst snatch it up, string it, draw it and break it.

श्वः कंसक्षपणोत्सवस्य पुरतः प्रारम्भतूर्योपम-
श्चापध्वंसमहाध्वनिस्तव विभो देवानरोमाञ्चयत् ।
कंसस्यापि च वेपथुस्तदुदितः कोदण्डखण्डद्वयी-
चण्डाभ्याहत-रक्षिपूरुषरवै-रुत्कूलितोऽभूत् त्वया ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! The terrific sound produced by the breaking of the bow caused great rejoicing among the Devas, as if it were the drum-beat heralding the festivity of wicked Kamsa's destruction due on the next day. And the tremor it induced in Kamsa was augmented by the cries of the bow keepers who were heavily belaboured (by Thee and Balarama) with the two pieces of the broken bow.

शिष्टैर्दुष्टजनैश्च दृष्टमहिमा प्रीत्या च भीत्या ततः
सम्पश्यन् पुरसम्पदं प्रविचरन् सायं गतो वाटिकाम् ।
श्रीदाम्ना सह राधिकाविरहजं खेदं वदन् प्रस्वप-
न्नानन्द-न्नवतारकार्यघटना-द्वातेश संरक्ष माम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Revealing Thy greatness to the good and to the wicked alike—to the good by generating love and to the wicked, dread—and going about seeing all the worthy and attractive sights in the city, Thou didst return in the evening to Thy camp in the outskirts. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who afterwards didst unburden to Thy comrade Sudama Thy pain of separation from Sri Radha, and fall asleep in great contentment at the impending fulfilment of an important purpose of Thy incarnation—may Thou be pleased to protect me!

CANTO 75

SALVATION OF KAMSA

प्रातः सन्त्रस्तभोजक्षितिपतिवचसा प्रस्तुते मल्लतूर्ये
सङ्घे राज्ञां च मञ्चानभिययुषि गते नन्दगोपेऽपि हर्म्यम् ।
कंसे सौधाधिरूढे त्वमपि सहबलः सानुग-श्चारुवेषो
रङ्गद्वारं गतोऽभूः कुपितकुवलयापीड-न्नागावलीढम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Early in the morning when, at the orders of the frightened Kamsa, the commencement of the wrestling match

was announced by beat of drums, when for witnessing the match all the visiting chieftains including Nanda Gopa had taken their seats on elevated and decorated daises and when Kamsa himself had ascended to the top floor of his palace, Thou, dressed in attractive attire and accompanied by Balarama and Thy friends, didst arrive at the gates of the arena, and wert obstructed by the excited elephant Kuvalaya-pida stationed there (at the wicked Kamsa's order to attack and kill Thee).

पापिष्ठापेहि मार्गाद्-द्रुतमिति वचसा निष्ठुरक्रुद्धबुद्धे-
रम्बष्ठस्य प्रणोदा-दधिकजवजुषा हस्तिना गृह्यमाणः ।
केलीमुक्तोऽथ गोपी-कुचकलश-चिरस्पर्धिनं कुम्भमस्य
व्याहत्यालीयथास्त्वं चरणभुवि पुनर्निर्गतो वल्गुहासी ।। 2 ।।

2. The evil-minded elephant keeper, with his temper and viciousness roused on being peremptorily ordered to move away from the path, directed the elephant to charge Thee with a rapid movement. Thou, on being caught up by the trunk of the elephant, didst easily release Thyself and deliver a blow on its bulging forehead which had long been in rivalry with the breasts of Thy Gopikas, and then clinging between the legs of the animal for a time, come out soon with a smiling face.

हस्तप्राप्योऽप्यगम्यो झटिति मुनिजनस्येव धावन् गजेन्द्रं
क्रीडन्नापात्य भूमौ पुनरभिपतत-स्तस्य दन्तं सजीवम् ।
मूलादुन्मूल्य तन्मूलग-महितमहामौक्तिका-न्यात्ममित्रे
प्रादास्त्वं हारमेभि-र्ललितविरचितं राधिकायै दिशेति ।। 3 ।।

3. Coming almost within the grasp of the elephant but somehow eluding it suddenly, as Thou dost in the case of sages meditating on Thee, Thou didst now rush at it and pretend to fall before it in play. And as the elephant thereupon attacked Thee, Thou didst pull out by roots the tusk of that animal alive, and extracting the large and priceless pearls imbedded therein, hand them over to Thy friend Sudama to make a necklace for Radhika.

गृह्णानं दन्तमंसे युतमथ हलिना रङ्गमङ्गाविशन्तं
त्वां मङ्गल्याङ्ग-भङ्गीरभस-हृतमनोलोचना वीक्ष्य लोकाः ।
हंहो धन्यो नु नन्दो नहि नहि पशुपालाङ्गना नो यशोदा
नो नो धन्येक्षणाः स्मस्त्रिजगति वयमेवेति सर्वे शशंसुः ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord! When Thou, together with Balarama, didst enter the arena, with the elephant's tusk resting on Thy shoulder, the assembled citizens who witnessed that scene, being attracted powerfully by the grace and beauty of Thy form, declared in astonishment, 'Wonder of wonders! Nanda, indeed, is the most fortunate of men! No, no, it is the Gopa women who deserve to be called so! No, no, not even they—Yasoda, indeed, is the most fortunate! But lo! we have now eclipsed them all, having had the good fortune to feast our eyes on this unique scene!'

पूर्णं ब्रह्मैव साक्षान्निरवधि-परमानन्द-सान्द्रप्रकाशं
गोपेषु त्वं व्यलासी न खलु बहुजनै-स्तावदावेदितोऽभूः ।
दृष्ट्वाथ त्वां तदेदं प्रथममुपगते पुण्यकाले जनौघाः
पूर्णानन्दा विपापाः सरसमभिजगु-स्त्वत्कृतानि स्मृतानि ॥ 5 ॥

5. Most of the citizens, indeed, had no knowledge that Thou who didst live among the Gopas wert verily the all-pervading Brahman, the manifestation of the condensed essence of Bliss. Now the time for the fruition of their good deeds having come, some of them for the first time saw Thee, the embodiment of Brahman, with their mind free from all sins and steeped in perfect bliss, and began to recount and praise Thy superhuman deeds.

चाणूरो मल्लवीर-स्तदनु नृपगिरा मुष्टिको मुष्टिशाली
त्वां रामञ्चाभिपेदे झटझटिति मिथो मुष्टिपातातिरूक्षम् ।
उत्पातापातनाकर्षण-विविधरणा-न्यासतां तत्र चित्रं
मृत्योः प्रागेव मल्लप्रभु-रगमदयं भूरिशो बन्धमोक्षान् ॥ 6 ॥

6. As ordered by king Kamsa, Thou wert met and challenged at Thy entry into the arena by the most powerful

of wrestlers, Chanura by name, and Balarama by Mushtika, famous for his devastating punches. Then followed the wrestling bouts with their various tactics like fierce slapping, fisting, throwing up and pulling round. Strange indeed that, in the course of it, the leading wrestler Chanura had, even before death, several turns of bondage and liberation (by way of clutches with arms and legs and release from them)!

हा धिक् कष्टं कुमारौ सुललितवपुषौ मल्लवीरौ कठोरौ
न द्रक्ष्यामो व्रजाम-स्त्वरितमिति जने भाषमाणें तदानीम् ।
चाणूरं तं करोद्भ्रामण-विगलदसुं पोथयामासिथोर्व्यां
पिष्टोऽभू-न्मुष्टिकोऽपि द्रुतमथ हलिना नष्टशिष्टैर्दधावे ॥ 7 ॥

7. 'What a tragedy! What an atrocity! Here are these boys, tender and handsome, on the one hand, and there those wrestlers, fierce and experienced. How are we to see such an unequal contest! We shall leave this place at once!' While the spectators were speaking thus among themselves, Thou didst whirl Chanura round and round and throw him dead on the ground, whilst Mushtika too was soon plastered lifeless by Balarama with his fists. The rest of the wrestlers (employed by Kamsa) took to their heels in fright.

कंसः संवार्य तूर्यं खलमति-रविदन् कार्यमार्यान् पितॄंस्ता-
नाहन्तुं व्याप्तमूर्तेस्तव च समशिषद्-दूरमुत्सारणाय ।
रुष्टो दुष्टोक्तिभिस्त्वं गरुड इव गिरिं मञ्चमञ्च-न्नुदञ्चत्-
खड्गव्यावल्ग-दुस्संग्रहमपि च हठात्-प्राग्रही-रौग्रसेनिम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Ordering the drums and trumpets to be silenced, the evil-minded Kamsa, panick-stricken and confused about the next course of action, directed his men to kill Thy venerable parents and drive Thee, the All-pervading Being, out of his kingdom to some far off place. Enraged at these orders of the cruel king Kamsa, Thou didst spring up to his highly elevated throne (on the topmost floor of his palace), as Garuda ascends to the top of a mountain, and grip him, though he resisted by brandishing his sword.

सद्यो निष्पिष्टसन्धिं भुवि नरपतिमापात्य तस्योपरिष्टा-
त्त्वय्यापात्ये तदैव त्वदुपरि पतिता नाकिनां पुष्पवृष्टिः ।
किं किं ब्रूमस्तदानीं सततमपि भिया त्वद्गतात्मा स भेजे
सायुज्यं त्वद्वधोत्था परम परमियं वासना कालनेमेः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Hurling Kamsa to the ground with all his joints shattered, Thou didst jump down on his body from a great height. Simultaneously a rain of flowers showered by the jubiliant Devas fell on Thee from the skies. Wonder of wonders! This Kamsa whose mortal dread of Thee had made his mind perpetually engrossed in Thee, attained liberation by union with Thee. O Supreme Being! This consummation attending on Kamsa is to be explained by the fact that he was the Asura Kalanemi in a previous birth, and being killed by Thee then, was born as Kamsa with the tendency to commune with Thee through hatred and fear.[23]

तद्भ्रातॄनष्ट पिष्ट्वा द्रुतमथ पितरौ सन्नमन्नुग्रसेनं
कृत्वा राजान-मुच्चैर्यदुकुलमखिलं मोदयन् कामदानैः ।
भक्ताना-मुत्तमश्चोद्धव-ममरगुरोराप्तनीतिं सखायं
लब्ध्वा तुष्टो नगर्यां पवनपुरपते रुन्धि मे सर्वरोगान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. After the eight brothers of Kamsa also were killed, Thou didst perform obeisance to Thy parents (Vasudeva and Devaki) and then crown Ugrasena as king, thereby gladdening the clan of Yadus by the fulfilment of their cherished desire (namely, the restoration of their predominant position usurped by Kamsa). O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who afterwards didst get for Thyself as friend Uddhava who had received instruction in law and ethics from Brihaspathi, the teacher of the gods, and didst continue to live happily in the city—may Thou be pleased to cure me of my ailments!

CANTO 76

MESSAGE TO GOPIKAS

गत्वा सान्दीपनिमथ चतुष्षष्टिमात्रैरहोभि:
सर्वज्ञस्त्वं सह मुसलिना सर्वविद्यां गृहीत्वा ।
पुत्रं नष्टं यमनिलयनादाहृतं दक्षिणार्थं
दत्वा तस्मै निजपुरमगा नादयन् पाञ्चजन्यम् ।। 1 ।।

1. Afterwards Thou with Balarama didst go to sage Sandipani and master under him all knowledge (with its eighteen branches) in a mere sixty-four days. At the end, as a gift to the teacher, Thou didst restore his lost son from Yama's abode, and go back to the city blowing Thy conch Panchajanya (which Thou hadst acquired on Thy expedition to recover Thy teacher's son).

स्मृत्वा स्मृत्वा पशुपसुदृशः प्रेमभारप्रणुन्नाः
कारुण्येन त्वमपि विवशः प्राहिणोरुद्धवं तम् ।
किञ्चामुष्मै परमसुहृदे भक्तवर्याय तासां
भक्त्युद्रेकं सकलभुवने दुर्लभं दर्शयिष्यन् ।। 2 ।।

2. Remembering the Gopikas oppressed by Thy constant thought as also the weight of their love for Thee, and Thyself too being overpowered by tenderness towards them, Thou didst send Thy friend Uddhava with a message to them, whose intense love, unparalleled in all the worlds, Thou didst desire to demonstrate to Thy friend.

त्वन्माहात्म्य-प्रथिमपिशुनं गोकुलं प्राप्य सायं
त्वद्वार्ताभिर्बहु स रमयामास नन्दं यशोदाम् ।
प्रातर्दृष्ट्वा मणिमयरथं शङ्किताः पङ्कजाक्ष्यः
श्रुत्वा प्राप्तं भवदनुचरं त्यक्तकार्याः समीयुः ।। 3 ।।

3. It was towards evening that Uddhava arrived at Gokula where prosperity reigned because of Thy erstwhile presence. Meeting Nanda and Yasoda, he delighted them with

news about Thee. In the morning the Gopikas, whose curiosity had been roused by the sight of the decorated chariot, came to know of the arrival of Thy friend (Uddhava) and hastened to meet him, leaving aside all their domestic duties.

दृष्ट्वा चैनं त्वदुपम-लसद्वेष-भूषाभिरामं
स्मृत्वा स्मृत्वा तव विलसिता-न्युच्चकैस्तानि तानि ।
रुद्धालापाः कथमपि पुनर्गद्गदां वाचमूचुः
सौजन्यादीन् निजपरभिदा-मप्यलं विस्मरन्त्यः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Seeing him dressed and adorned in a manner resembling Thine, and remembering again and again Thy sportive acts of love, so unique in themselves, they became for a time speechless. Afterwards (when they had regained their power of speech), they addressed Uddhava in faltering words, forgetting to do even ordinary courtesies and oblivious of the distance separating them (rustic women) from Uddhava, a messenger from the royal court of Mathura.

श्रीमन् किं त्वं पितृजनकृते प्रेषितो निर्दयेन
क्वासौ कान्तो नगरसुदृशां हा हरे नाथ पायाः ।
आश्लेषाणा-ममृतवपुषो हन्त ते चुम्बनाना-
मुन्मादानां कुहकवचसां विस्मरेत् कान्त का वा ॥ 5 ॥

5. 'Sir, is it not that the heartless one has sent you to meet only his father and mother (and not us)? Captivated by the attractions of the beautiful women of the city, where is he, their paramour, now staying? O Hari! Dear Lord! Save us! How can we forget Thy delightful embraces and kisses, Thy inebriating deeds and frolicsome words!

रासक्रीडा-लुलितललितं विश्लथत्केशपाशं
मन्दोद्भिन्न-श्रमजलकणं लोभनीयं त्वदङ्गम् ।
कारुण्याब्धे सकृदपि समालिङ्गितुं दर्शयेति
प्रेमोन्मादाद्-भुवनमदन त्वत्प्रियास्त्वां विलेपुः ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'O Ocean of Mercy! Reveal Thyself unto us so that we may once more embrace that form of Thine, moistened and relaxed by the exertion of Rasa dance and rendered charming by Thy dishevelled hair!' Thus, O Charmer of the Worlds! did Thy dear ones implore Thee mournfully in the frenzy of their love.

एवंप्रायै-र्विवशवचनै-राकुला गोपिकास्ता-
स्त्वत्सन्देशैः प्रकृतिमनयत् सोऽथ विज्ञानगर्भैः ।
भूयस्ताभि-र्मुदितमतिभि-स्त्वन्मयीभि-र्वधूभि-
स्तत्तद्वार्ता-सरसमनयत् कानिचिद्वासराणि ॥ 7 ॥

7. With Thy message of deep spiritual import, Uddhava comforted the Gopikas who were bemoaning their fate with words uttered incoherently amidst sobs and sighs. Afterwards, when, through the experience of Thy inner presence, their peace of mind was restored, he spent in their midst a few days full of ecstatic joy generated by conversations on Thy exploits.

त्वत्प्रोद्गानैः सहितमनिशं सर्वतो गेहकृत्यं
त्वद्वार्तैव प्रसरति मिथः सैव चोत्स्वापलापाः ।
चेष्टाः प्रायस्त्वदनुकृतय-स्त्वन्मयं सर्वमेवं
दृष्ट्वा तत्र व्यमुहदधिकं विस्मयादुद्धवोऽयम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Always going about their household duties to the accompaniment of songs on Thy deeds, ever conversing about Thee among themselves, speaking about Thee even in sleep, moving about with a sense of identification with Thy movements—such was the condition of these Gopikas, such the permeation of everything there by Thy presence. The observation of it left even the great devotee Uddhava stunned with astonishment.

राधाया मे प्रियतममिदं मत्प्रियैवं ब्रवीति
त्वं किं मौनं कलयसि सखे मानिनी मत्प्रियेव ।
इत्याद्येव प्रवदति सखि त्वत्प्रियो निर्जने मा-
मित्थंवादै-ररमयदयं त्वत्प्रिया-मुत्पलाक्षीम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. " 'This is extremely liked by my Radha. My dear one is in the habit of speaking in this way. Why do you, friend, keep silent like that girl of high sensitiveness?' In such strains, O Radha, is Krishna accustomed to talk to me about Thee in privacy"—Recounting words like these, Uddhava gladdened the heart of that Gopika of handsome looks.

एष्यामि द्रागनुपगमनं केवलं कार्यभारा-
द्विश्लेषेऽपि स्मरणदृढता-सम्भवान्मास्तु खेदः।
ब्रह्मानन्दे मिलति नचिरात् सङ्गमो वा वियोग-
स्तुल्यो वः स्यादिति तव गिरा सोऽकरो-न्निर्व्यथास्ताः ॥ 10 ॥

10. " 'I shall be returning soon! I am held back here only owing to pressure of duties. Do not grieve. Separation only strengthens love. Soon will you attain to the joy of Brahman, which will make you experience separation and union as equally blissful.' " With such messages of Thine, Uddhava appeased the Gopikas.[24]

एवं भक्तिः सकलभुवने नेक्षिता न श्रुता वा
किं शास्त्रौघैः किमिह तपसा गोपिकाभ्यो नमोऽस्तु।
इत्यानन्दाकुल-मुपगतं गोकुलादुद्धवं तं
दृष्ट्वा हृष्टो गुरुपुरपते पाहि मामामयौघात् ॥ 11 ॥

11. 'In all the worlds none has witnessed or heard of God-love equal to this. Of what avail is the boast of scriptural study or of austere practices? (These Gopikas, possessed of the Lord's grace, have attained to an exalted state of devotion even without any of these, whereas in many with plenty of such opportunities so little of devotion is seen to develop). So salutation to the Gopikas!' O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who didst joyfully receive Uddhava who on his return gave expression to his respect for the Gopikas in such words—may Thou be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 77

JARASANDHA'S INVASION

सैरन्ध्रयास्तदनु चिरं स्मरातुराया
यातोऽभूः सुललितमुद्धवेन सार्धम् ।
आवासं त्वदुपगमोत्सवं सदैव
ध्यायन्त्याः प्रतिदिनवाससज्जिकायाः ॥ 1 ॥

1. One day, accompanied by Uddhava, Thou didst go to the festooned and decorated home of Sairandhri, (chamber maid. See c. 74, v. 5), who, love-lorn and ever-absorbed in thoughts of Thee, had all these days been keeping herself ever in readiness, well-adorned and well-dressed, for the festivity of Thy arrival and reception at her house.

उपगते त्वयि पूर्णमनोरथां प्रमदसम्भ्रम-कम्प्रपयोधराम् ।
विविधमानन-मादधतीं मुदा रहसि तां रमयाञ्चकृषे सुखम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Thou didst in privacy sport with her, who, delighted with the fulfilment of her long-cherished desire, moved about with her breasts heaving in excessive excitement, and received Thee with honours and offerings of various kinds.

पृष्टा वरं पुनरसाववृणोद्वराकी
भूयस्त्वया सुरतमेव निशान्तरेषु ।
सायुज्यमस्त्विवति वदेत् बुध एव कामं
सामीप्यम-स्त्वनिशमित्यपि नाब्रवीत् किम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. When afterwards Thou didst ask her to seek any boon of her choice, the stupid woman prayed that she might spend more nights with Thee. Perhaps it is only an awakened soul that will pray for Sayujya (liberation by dissolution in Thee). But then why did she not pray at least for Samipya (the privilege of abiding ever near Thee)? (It was surely due to the Lord's will).

ततो भवान् देव निशासु कासुचि-न्मृगीदृशं तां निभृतं विनोदयन् ।
अदादुपश्लोक इति श्रुतं सुतं स नारदात्-सात्वततन्त्रविद् बभौ ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord! Subsequently, Thou didst spend some nights with her, conferring on her the greatest delight, and also didst beget on her a son named Upasloka, who became the exponent of Satvata Samhita (Vaishnava scripture, known also as the Pancharatra), which he learnt from the sage Narada (The choice of the particular boon by Sairandhri was guided by the Lord's will for this purpose of revealing Satvata Samhita).

अक्रूरमन्दिरमितोऽथ बलोद्धवाभ्या-मभ्यर्चितो बहु नुतो मुदितेन तेन ।
एनं विसृज्य विपिनागत-पाण्डवेय-वृत्तं विवेदिथ तथा धृतराष्ट्रचेष्टाम् ॥

5. Afterwards Thou, with Balarama, didst visit the house of Akrura, who received Thee joyfully with worship and hymns. Then sending him out on a mission (to the capital of the Kurus), Thou didst gather all information about the Pandavas since their return from the forest and about the doings of Dhritarashtra (under the influence of his evil-minded sons).

विघाता-ज्जामातुः परमसुहृदो भोजनृपते-
र्जरासन्धे रुन्ध-त्यनवधि-रुषान्धेऽथ मथुराम् ।
रथाद्यै र्द्योर्लब्धैः कतिपयफलस्त्वं बलयुत-
स्त्रयोविंश-त्यक्षौहिणि तदुपनीतं समहृथाः ॥ 6 ॥

6. King Jarasandha, who was both the father-in-law and a close friend of Kamsa, blind with terrible rage over the slaughter of the latter, came with a huge army and besieged the city of Mathura. Though Thou didst have only a small army, it was supplemented by chariots and other equipment sent from heaven, and with these, Thou along with Balarama didst destroy that huge army of Jarasandha consisting of twenty three Akshauhanis of troops. (An Akshauhani is said to consist of 21,870 elephants, an equal number of chariots, 65,610 cavalry and 1,09,350 infantry.)

बद्धं बलादथ बलेन बलोत्तरं त्वं
भूयो बलोद्यमरसेन मुमोचिथैनम् ।
निश्शेषदिग्जय-समाहृत-विश्वसैन्यात्
कोऽन्यस्ततो हि बलपौरुषवां-स्तदानीम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Jarasandha of great prowess was captured and bound up by Balarama, but was released by Thee, as Thou wert interested (for the fulfiment of the purpose of Thy incarnation, namely, the destruction of evil forces) to see him come back for fresh attack with newly mobilised armies. For, there was none then more powerful than Jarasandha, as he had conquered all the kings of the time and commandeered their armies.

भग्नः स लग्नहृदयोऽपि नृपैः प्रणुन्नो
युद्धं त्वया व्यधित षोडशकृत्व एवम् ।
अक्षौहिणीः शिव शिवास्य जघन्थ विष्णो
सम्भूय सैकनवति-त्रिशतं तदानीम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Though crushed and humiliated by defeat in battle, he attacked Thee in this way sixteen times, egged on by his satellite kings, and, O Vishnu, it is astonishing to think that altogether in all these campaigns thou didst destroy three hundred and ninety one Akshouhinis of his troops (*i.e.* about four and a quarter crores of men and three and a half crores of animals like elephants and horses, besides twentytwo thousand chariots).

अष्टादशेऽस्य समरे समुपेयुषि त्वं
दृष्ट्वा पुरोऽथ यवनं यवनत्रिकोटचा ।
त्वष्ट्रा विधाप्य पुरमाशु पयोधिमध्ये
तत्राऽथ योगबलतः स्वजनाननैषीः ॥ 9 ॥

9. When the eighteenth attack, led by a Yavana chief with an army of three crores of Yavanas, was imminent, Thou hadst a new city built by Visvakarma in an island in the sea, and didst transfer all Thy people to it by Thy superhuman powers.

पद्भ्यां त्वं पद्ममाली चकित इव पुरान्निर्गतो धावमानो
म्लेच्छेशेनानुयातो वधसुकृतविहीनेन शैले न्यलैषीः ।
सुप्तेनांघ्र्याहतेन द्रुतमथ मुचुकुन्देन भस्मीकृतेऽस्मिन्
भूपायास्मै गुहान्ते सुललितवपुषा तस्थिषे भक्तिभाजे ॥ 10 ॥

10. Thou, adorned with a lotus wreath, didst come out of the city on foot, and simulate flight. When the hapless Yavana leader, who was not destined to die at Thy hand, came in hot pursuit, Thou didst disappear up a hill, where, in a cave, king Muchukunda was lying asleep. Mistaking the king for Thee, the Yavana kicked at him, only to be reduced to ashes by the angry look of the awakened king. At this juncture, Thou didst manifest Thy charming form before the devout king.

ऐक्ष्वाकोऽहं विरक्तोऽस्म्य-खिलनृपसुखे त्वत्प्रसादैककांक्षी
हा देवेति स्तुवन्तं वरविततिषु तं निस्पृहं वीक्ष्य हृष्यन् ।
मुक्तेस्तुल्यांश्च भक्तिं धुतसकलमलं मोक्षमप्याशु दत्वा
कार्यं हिंसाविशुध्यै तप इति च तदा प्रात्थ लोकप्रतीत्यै ॥ 11 ॥

11. 'I am of the royal dynasty of Ikshvakus, O Lord. Having renounced all the pleasures of royal life, I am now desirous of only one thing, and that is Thy grace.' Gladdened to see that the king, who praised Thee thus, was devoid of desire for any boon, Thou didst confer on him Bhakti (devotion), which is equal to Mukti (liberation) itself, and direct him, as an example to the world, to perform austerities in expiation of whatever demerit he had for inflicting pain on living beings in the discharge of kingly duties. He was to obtain Mukti itself in the next birth.

तदनु मथुरां गत्वा हत्वा चमूं यवनाहृतां
मगधपतिना मार्गे सैन्यैः पुरेव निवारितः ।
चरमविजयं दर्पायास्मै प्रदाय पलायितो
जलधिनगरीं यातो वातालयेश्वर पाहि माम् ॥ 12 ॥

12. Afterwards, returning to Mathura, Thou didst destroy the army that the Yavana had brought with him,

and then, while on Thy way back to Thy new island home at Dwaraka, Thou wert checked again by Jarasandha of Magadha. In this, the eighteenth battle, in order to inflate his pride and egotism, Thou didst make a show of yielding the final victory to him by flying away to Thy new island home before his attack. May Thou, the Lord of Guruvayoor who didst accomplish all this, be pleased to save me!

CANTO 78

THE PRAYER OF RUKMINI

त्रिदशवर्धकि-वर्धितकौशलं त्रिदशदत्त-समस्तविभूतिमत् ।
जलधिमध्यगतं त्वमभूषय। नवपुरं वपुरञ्चितरोचिषा ॥ 1 ॥

1. By the beauty and splendour of Thy personality Thou didst indeed enhance the excellence of even that new sea-girt home of Thine, on which Viswakarma, the architect of the Devas, himself had spent all his skill, and the Devas, in their turn, had lavished all their divine embellishments.

ददुषि रेवतभूभृति रेवतीं हलभृते तनयां विधिशासनात् ।
महितमुत्सवघोष-मपूपुषः समुदितै-र्मुदितैः सह यादवैः ॥ 2 ॥

2. When, at the bidding of Brahma, king Revata bestowed his daughter Revati in marriage to Balarama, Thou along with a large gathering of the Yadavas didst celebrate the occasion as a grand festival.

अथ विदर्भसुतां खलु रुक्मिणीं प्रणयिनीं त्वयि देव सहोदरः ।
स्वयमदित्सत चेदिमहीभुजे स्वतमसा तमसाधुमुपाश्रयन् ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Lord! Rukmini, the daughter of the king of Vidarbha, was in love with Thee. But her brother Rukmi, out of his vicious nature, resolved by himself (without the knowledge of his father, the king) to give her in marriage to Sisupala, the king of the Chedis, whose only qualification was that he was very evil-minded and was a favourite of his.

चिरधृतप्रणया त्वयि बालिका सपदि काङ्क्षित-भङ्गसमाकुला ।
तव निवेदयितुं द्विजमादिशत् स्वकदनं कदनङ्गविनिर्मितम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. The tender-hearted Rukmini, who had set her heart firmly on Thee for long, and who was distressed by the imminent threat to the fulfiment of her desire, sent a Brahmana as a messenger to acquaint Thee with her distressed state brought about by a cruel Cupid.

द्विजसुतोऽपि च तूर्णमुपाययौ तव पुरं हि दुराशदुरासदम् ।
मुदमवाप च सादरपूजित: स भवता भवतापहृता स्वयम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. The Brahmana messenger reached Thy city without any difficulty, although it was inaccessible to people with bad intentions. And he felt highly delighted with the cordial reception given to him in person by Thee, who art the rescuer of men from the travails of Samsara.

स च भवन्तमवोचत कुण्डिने नृपसुता खलु राजति रुक्मिणी ।
त्वयि समुत्सुकया निजधारता-रहितया हि तया प्रहितोऽस्म्यहम् ॥

6. He said to Thee, ' In the city of Kundina there is the noble and virtuous princess Rukmini. Out of deep love for Thee, she has abandoned the restraint and dignity of a princess, and sent me with the following message to Thee:

तव हृताऽस्मि पुरैव गुणैरहं हरति मां किल चेदिनृपोऽधुना ।
अयि कृपालय पालय मामिति प्रजगदे जगदेकपते तया ॥ 7 ॥

7. " From long since, Thou hast captured my mind by the power of Thy great excellences. But now it seems as if Sisupala, the king of the Chedis, will capture my body. O Lord! Thou Receptacle of Mercy and Master of all the Worlds! Deign to save me from this dire fate "—such is her prayer to Thee.

अशरणां यदि मां त्वमुपेक्षसे सपदि जीवितमेव जहाम्यहम् ।
इति गिरा सुतनोरतनोद्भृशं सुहृदयं हृदयं तव कातरम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. "If Thou shouldst forsake me, a helpless girl, I shall court death immediately." With this message of fair Rukmini, the good-hearted Brahmana made Thy heart extremely agitated.

अकथयस्त्व-मथैनमये सखे तदधिका मम मन्मथवेदना ।
नृपसमक्षमुपेत्य हराम्यहं तदयि तां दयितामसितेक्षणाम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Thou didst then tell the Brahmana as follows: 'O friend! The pangs of love in my heart are more intense than hers. Therefore I shall myself go there and by force of arms capture that dear and fair damsel in the very presence of all the kings.'

प्रमुदितेन च तेन समं तदा रथगतो लघु कुण्डिनमेयिवान् ।
गुरुमरुत्पुरनायक मे भवान् वितनुतां तनुतां निखिलापदाम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who, accompanied by that Brahmana who was jubilant with the success of his mission, didst get into Thy chariot and reach Kundina in a short time—may Thou be pleased to relieve me of my distress!

CANTO 79

MARRIAGE OF RUKMINI

बलसमेतबलानुगतो भवान् पुरमगाहत भीष्मकमानितः ।
द्विजसुतं त्वदुपागमवादिनं धृतरसा तरसा प्रणनाम सा ॥ 1 ॥

1. Thou, who wert followed by Balarama with the army, was respectfully received on Thy arrival at Kundina by its king Bhishmaka, while the Brahmana was honoured with respectful salutation by Rukmini, who was overjoyed to hear from him about Thy arrival in the city.

भुवनकान्तमवेक्ष्य भवद्वपु-र्नृपसुतस्य निशम्य च चेष्टितम् ।
विपुलखेदजुषां पुरवासिनां सरुदितै-रुदितै-रगमन्निशा ॥ 2 ॥

2. Seeing Thy world-bewitching form and hearing about the perverse decision of prince Rukmi, the people of Kundina were overwhelmed with grief and spent the night sleepless, talking on this subject with tears in their eyes.

तदनु वन्दितुमिन्दुमुखी शिवां विहितमङ्गल-भूषणभासुरा ।
निरगमद्-भवदर्पितजीविता स्वपुरतः पुरतः सुभटावृता ॥ ३ ॥

3. Next morning Rukmini, the moon-faced beauty, came out of the palace, shining in the splendour of appropriate bridal decor, and proceeded under the protection of well-armed guards to worship in the temple of the Divine Mother, with her heart, however, for ever offered at Thy feet.

कुलवधूभिरुपेत्य कुमारिका गिरिसुतां परिपूज्य च सादरम् ।
मुहुरयाचत तत्पदपङ्कजे निपतिता पतितां तव केवलम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. The princess in the company of noble women performed the worship of the Divine Mother with great devotion, and prostrated at Her feet with the one prayer that Thou be her husband.

समवलोक-कुतूहल-सङ्कुले नृपकुले निभृतं त्वयि च स्थिते ।
नृपसुता निरगाद् गिरिजालयात् सुरुचिरं रुचिरञ्जित-दिङ्मुखा ॥5॥

5. As the assembled kings stood in joyous expectation of seeing Rukmini, and as Thou didst remain aloof and silent, there came out of the temple Rukmini, handsome beyond description and lighting up the quarters with her brilliance.

भुवनमोहन-रूपरुचा तदा विवशिताखिल-राजकदम्बया ।
त्वमपि देव कटाक्षविमोक्षणैः प्रमदया मदयाञ्चकृषे मनाक् ॥ 6 ॥

6. That attractive damsel, whose bewitching beauty held all the assembled kings spell-bound, did generate a trace of infatuation even in Thee by the frequent glances she cast at Thee.

क्वनु गमिष्यसि चन्द्रमुखीति तां सरसमेत्य करेण हरन् क्षणात् ।
समधिरोप्य रथं त्वमपाहृथा भुवि ततो विततो निनदो द्विषाम् ॥

7. 'Whither do you go, O moon-faced beauty!' With these words of admiration, Thou didst lead her by the arm and put her in Thy chariot, to be carried off by force, whereupon there arose loud protestations from Thy rivals.

क्व नु गतः पशुपाल इति क्रुधा कृतरणा यदुभिश्च जिता नृपाः ।
न तु भवानुदचाल्यत तैरहो पिशुनकैः शुनकैरिव केसरी ॥ 8 ॥

8. 'Where has this stripling of a cowherd fled?' The assembled kings, who, with such angry and contemptuous words, put up a fight against the Yadus (headed by Balarama), were themselves put to flight very soon. Thou, however, wert not in the least moved by the conduct of those wicked men, even as a lion is not by the barking of a pack of dogs.

तदनु रुक्मिणमागत-माहवे वधमुपेक्ष्य निबध्य विरूपयन् ।
हृतमदं परिमुच्य बलोक्तिभिः पुरमया रमया सह कान्तया ॥ 9 ॥

9. Rukmi, the brother of Rukmini, who now came to battle, was not killed but only bound and deformed (by the removal of his hair, whiskers etc., as a punishment) and thus deprived of his haughtiness and arrogance, at the instance of Balarama. After releasing him from his bondage, Thou didst return to Thy city of Dwaraka with Thy wife, who was none but Rema herself.

नवसमागम-लज्जितमानसां प्रणयकौतुक-जृम्भितमन्मथाम् ।
अरमयः खलु नाथ यथासुखं रहसि तां हसितांशुलसन्मुखीम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Thou didst in privacy heartily entertain and delight Rukmini, whose face beamed with smiles, caught up as she was between the shyness attendant on the novel experience of meeting with the husband and the surging passion roused by the stirrings of love.

विविधनर्मभिरेव-महर्निशं प्रमदमाकलयन् पुनरेकदा ।
ऋजुमतेः किल वक्रगिरा भवान् वरतनो-रतनोदतिलोलताम् ॥ 11 ॥

11. While delighting her day and night with jokes and pleasantries, once Thou didst in fun happen to use words of dubious meaning (conveying Thy apparent indifference to her), whereupon the simple heart of Rukmini, which perceived only the straightforward meaning of words, became extremely unhappy and agitated.

तदधिकैरथ लालनकौशलैः प्रणयिनीमधिकं सुखयन्निमाम् ।

अयि मुकुन्द भवच्चरितानि नः प्रगदतां गदतान्तिमपाकुरु ॥ 12 ॥

12. But Thou didst follow this up with love sports which gave greater delight to Thy beloved than ever before. O Lord! May Thou be pleased to bring an end to the travails of illness attending on me, who am devoting myself to the narration of Thy excellences.

CANTO 80

LURE OF SYMANTAKA

सत्राजितस्त्वमथ लुब्धवदर्कलब्धं

दिव्यं स्यमन्तकमणिं भगवन्नयाचीः ।

तत्कारणं बहुविधं मम भाति नूनं

तस्यात्मजां त्वयि रतां छलतो विवोढुम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Once like a greedy man Thou didst beg of Satrajit for a heavenly jewel named Syamantaka, which he had obtained from the sun god. There might be many reasons for this, but to me it looks that it was only a pretext for enabling Thee to marry his daughter who was in love with Thee.

अदत्तं तं तुभ्यं मणिवरमनेनाल्पमनसा

प्रसेनस्तद्भ्राता गलभुवि वहन् प्राप मृगयाम् ।

अहन्नेनं सिंहो मणिमहसि मांसभ्रमवशात्

कपीन्द्रस्तं हत्वा मणिमपि च बालाय ददिवान् ॥ 2 ॥

2. That petty-minded man did not part with the jewel. One day Prasena, a brother of his, went on a hunt, wearing the jewel round his neck. A lion, mistaking the jewel from its colour for a lump of flesh, killed Prasena and took away the jewel, which, in turn, was appropriated, after the slaughter of the lion, by Jambavan, leader of monkeys, and given to his child.

शशंसुः सत्राजिद्गिरमनु जनास्त्वां मणिहरं
जनानां पीयूषं भवति गुणिनां दोषकणिका ।
ततः सर्वज्ञोऽपि स्वजनसहितो मार्गणपरः
प्रसेनं तं दृष्ट्वा हरिमपि गतोऽभूः कपिगुहाम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. From the allegations of Satrajit, there arose the general suspicion that the jewel had been stolen by Thee. Indeed! even the slightest deviation observed in the conduct of a virtuous man is like delicious nectar to the gullible public (whose delight consists in scandal-mongering)! So though all-knowing, Thou with Thy followers didst go in search of the jewel, come across the dead bodies of Prasena and the lion, and from these trace Thy way to the cave of the monkey chief.

भवन्तमवितर्कय-न्नतिवयाः स्वयं जाम्बवान्
मुकुन्दशरणं हि मां क इह रोद्धुमित्यालपन्
विभो रघुपते हरे जय जयेत्यलं मुष्टिभि-
श्चिरं तव समर्चनं व्यधित भक्तचूडामणिः ॥ 4 ॥

4. The aged Jambavan, without knowing Thy identity, exclaimed: 'Who is it that has come here to attack me, living a life of absolute self-surrender to the Lord?' And with invocations on his lips such as, 'O Rama, the leader of the Raghus! O All-pervading One and destroyer of the sins of all! Victory unto Thee!'—that crest jewel of a devotee did engage Thee in a duel, bestowing on Thee a plenteous offering of cuffs and blows!

बुद्ध्वाऽथ तेन दत्तां नवरमणीं वरमणीं च परिगृह्णन् ।
अनुगृह्णन्नमुमागाः सपदि च सत्राजिते मणिं प्रादाः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Finally, coming to know who Thou wert, Jambavan offered to Thee that precious jewel Syamantaka as also the jewel of a young beauty, his own daughter. Receiving them and blessing the devotee, Thou didst return without delay and restore the jewel to Satrajit.

तदनु स खलु व्रीडालोलो विलोलविलोचनां
दुहितरमहो धीमान् भामां गिरैव परार्पिताम् ।
अदित मणिना तुभ्यं लभ्यं समेत्य भवानपि
प्रमुदितमना-स्तस्यैवादा-न्मणिं गहनाशयः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Afterwards, the intelligent Satrajit, repentant and filled with shame for his conduct, realised the danger of possessing the precious jewel and made a present of it to Thee along with his young and beautiful daughter Satyabhama, whom he had promised earlier to give in marriage to another. And lo! Thou, far-sighted as Thou wert, didst accept with joy the gift of his daughter, but return the jewel to Satrajit himself.

व्रीडाकुलां रमयति त्वयि सत्यभामां कौन्तेयदाहकथयाथ कुरून् प्रयाते ।
ही गान्दिनेयकृतवर्मगिरा निपात्य सत्राजितं शतधनु-र्मणिमाजहार ॥

7. While living happily with bashful Satyabhama, Thou didst hear the rumour about the burning of the sons of Kunti in the palace of lac, and thereupon hurry to the country of the Kurus. Taking this opportunity, Satadhanva, to whom Satyabhama was originally betrothed, killed Satrajit under the promptings of Akrura and Kritavarman—a heinous crime indeed!

शोकात् कुरूनुपगतामवलोक्य कान्तां
हत्वा द्रुतं शतधनुं समहर्षयस्ताम् ।
रत्ने सशङ्क इव मैथिलगेहमेत्य
रामो गदां समशिशिक्षत धार्तराष्ट्रम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Satyabhama, struck with grief at her father's murder, went to the Kuru country to appraise Thee of the situation, and Thou didst comfort her by killing Satadhanva, who was

trying to flee the country out of fear. Balarama, meanwhile, left Dwaraka for the court of the king of Mithila, as if in disgust at the suspicion regarding the fate of the jewel, and while staying there, instructed Duryodhana in warfare with the mace.

अक्रूर एष भगवन् भवदिच्छयैव
सत्राजितः कुचरितस्य युयोज हिंसाम् ।
अक्रूरतो मणिमनाहृतवान् पुनस्त्वं
तस्यैव भूतिमुपधातुमिति ब्रुवन्ति ॥ 9 ॥

9. This Akrura, a devotee of Thine, must have planned the killing of the infamous Satrajit out of Thy inner prompting. For, in order that Akrura might be blessed with wealth, Thou didst not afterwards take away the jewel Syamantaka from him. So say the wise.

भक्तस्त्वयि स्थिरतरः स हि गान्दिनेय-
स्तस्यैव कापथमतिः कथमीश जाता ।
विज्ञानवान् प्रशमवानहमित्युदीर्णं
गर्वं ध्रुवं शमयितुं भवता कृतैव ॥ 10 ॥

10. Akrura was endowed with firm devotion to Thee. How could, O Lord, this sinful disposition to plot the death of Satrajit arise in him? (This is indeed, a perplexing question). It must surely have been by Thy will, so that his bloated vanity that he was endowed with knowledge and self-control might be crushed.[25]

यातं भयेन कृतवर्मयुतं पुनस्त-
माहूय तद्विनिहितं च मणिं प्रकाश्य
तत्रैव सुव्रतधरे विनिधाय तुष्यन्
भामाकुचान्तरशयः पवनेश पायाः ॥ 11 ॥

11. Akrura, along with Kritavarman, had fled away because of fear (on account of their involvement in the death of Satrajit). Thou didst have him recalled, and after making him produce the Syamantaka hidden by him, allow him to keep it himself, as he was endowed with many great virtues.

O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who, after making these settlements, didst live happily with Satyabhama—may Thou be pleased to save me!

CANTO 81

SALVATION OF NARAKASURA

स्निग्धां मुग्धां सततमपि तां लालयन् सत्यभामां
यातो भूयः सह खलु तया याज्ञसेनीविवाहम् ।
पार्थप्रीत्यै पुनरपि मनागास्थितो हस्तिपुर्यां
शक्रप्रस्थं पुरमपि विभो संविधायागतोऽभूः ।। 1 ।।

1. After spending many days in the endearment of loving and bashful Satyabhama, Thou didst go with her to attend the marriage of the daughter of Yajnasena (Panchali who became the wife of the Pandavas). After that, for pleasing the Pandavas, Thou didst spend several days more with them in Hasthinapura, during which Thou, O Lord, didst found the new city of Indraprastha for the Pandavas to stay. Next, Thou didst return to Thy abode.

भद्रां भद्रां भवदवरजां कौरवेणार्थ्यमानां
त्वद्वाचा तामहृत कुहनामस्करी शक्रसूनुः ।
तत्र क्रुद्धं बलमनुनयन् प्रत्यगास्तेन सार्धं
शक्रप्रस्थं प्रियसखमुदे सत्यभामासहायः ।। 2 ।।

2. Thy virtuous sister Subhadra had been sought in marriage by the Kaurava prince Duryodhana, but at Thy behest, she was taken away by Arjuna posing as an ascetic. Balarama, who was furious at this, was, however, reconciled ultimately by Thy persuasion, and was taken by Thee along with Satyabhama to Indraprastha to the great delight of Arjuna.

तत्र क्रीडन्नपि च यमुनाकूलदृष्टां गृहीत्वा
तां कालिन्दीं नगरमगमः खाण्डवप्रीणिताग्निः ।
भ्रातृत्रस्तां प्रणयविवशां देव पैतृष्वसेयीं
राज्ञां मध्ये सपदि जहिषे मित्रविन्दामवन्तीम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Seeing Kalindi, the presiding deity of the river Yamuna, on its banks, Thou, who wert sporting there, didst take her for Thy wife, and then after enabling god Agni (Fire) to satisfy his hunger by consuming the whole forest of Khandava, Thou didst return to Thy city. Afterwards, Mitravinda, a niece of Thy father and princess of Avanti, who was in love with Thee but lived in fear of the opposition of her brothers, was taken away by Thee by force in the presence of all kings.

सत्यां गत्वा पुनरुदवहो नग्नजिन्नन्दनां तां
बद्ध्वा सप्तापि च वृषवरान् सप्तमूर्तिर्निमेषात् ।
भद्रां नाम प्रददुरथ ते देव सन्तर्दनाद्या-
स्तत्सोदर्यां वरद भवतः सापि पैतृष्वसेयी ॥ 4 ॥

4. Next Thou didst marry love-lorn Satya, the daughter of the king Nagnajit of Ayodhya, after demonstrating Thy strength by tying up seven powerful bulls simultaneously with great ease, assuming seven forms. Following this, O Lord, Santardana and his brothers bestowed on Thee their sister Bhadra, who was also a niece of Thy father.

पार्थाद्यैरप्यकृतलवनं तोयमात्राभिलक्ष्यं
लक्षं छित्वा शफरमवृथा लक्ष्मणां मद्रकन्याम् ।
अष्टावेवं तव समभवन् वल्लभास्तत्र मध्ये
शुश्रोथ त्वं सुरपतिगिरा भौमदुश्चेष्टितानि ॥ 5 ॥

5. Striking successfully a fish-shaped target cognised only by its reflection in water, which none of the heroes of the time including the Pandavas could succeed in doing, Thou didst win the hand of Lakshmana, the daughter of the king of

Madra. Thus Thou didst by now have eight wives. From the words of Indra, the king of the gods, Thou didst then come to know of the wicked deeds of Narakasura.

स्मृतायातं पक्षिप्रवरमधिरूढ-स्त्वमगमो
वहन्नङ्के भामामुपवनमिवा-रातिभवनम् ।
विभिन्दन् दुर्गाणि त्रुटितपृतनाशोणितरसैः
पुरं तावत् प्राग्ज्योतिषमकुरुथाः शोणितपुरम् ।। 6 ।।

6. Garuda, Thy divine vehicle, hurried to Thee at the mere wish of Thine, and riding on him with Satyabhama on Thy lap, Thou didst enter the city of the enemy in as leisurely a manner as if thou wert entering a garden. Then destroying all its fortifications, Thou didst slaughter all the attacking forces, and with the blood flowing from their severed bodies, convert the city of Pragjyotisha into Sonitapura (meaning, 'city flowing with blood,' as also 'a new capital city by name Sonitapura')!

मुरस्त्वां पञ्चास्यो जलधिवनमध्या-दुदपतत् ।
स चक्रे चक्रेण प्रदलितशिरा मङ्क्षु भवता ।
चतुर्दन्तै-र्दन्तावलपतिभि-रिन्धानसमरं
रथाङ्केन छित्वा नरकमकरो-स्तीर्णनरकम् ।। 7 ।।

7. One of Naraka's minions Mura, the *Panchasya* (meaning 'lion' as also 'one with five faces'), having the ocean as the *forest* for his residence, came out of his abode to face Thee, but had his head soon cut off with Thy discus. Then Naraka himself came with his regiment of four-tusked elephants, and after a tough and protracted fight, Thou didst cut off the head of *Naraka* too, and thus save him from *naraka* (hell or sufferings of Samsara) by giving him liberation.

स्तुतो भूम्या राज्यं सपदि भगदत्तेऽस्य तनये
गजं चैकं दत्वा प्रजिघयिथ नागान्निजपुरीम् ।
खलेनाबद्धानां स्वगतमनसां षोडश पुनः
सहस्राणि स्त्रीणामपि च धनराशिं च विपुलम् ।। 8 ।।

8. Being hymned and worshipped by the Earth-goddess, the mother of Naraka, Thou didst install his son Bhagadatta on the throne. Giving him one of the four-tusked elephants of Naraka, Thou didst take the rest of them and much wealth to Thy city, along with sixteen thousand women whom wicked Naraka had imprisoned and who had developed love for Thee.

भौमापाहृतकुण्डलं तददितेर्दातुं प्रयातो दिवं
शक्राद्यैर्महितः समं दयितया द्युस्त्रीषु दत्तह्रिया ।
हृत्वा कल्पतरुं रुषाभिपतितं जित्वेन्द्रमभ्यागम-
स्तत्तु श्रीमददोष ईदृश इति व्याख्यातुमेवाकृथाः ॥ 9 ॥

9. In order to restore to Aditi, the mother of the gods, the ear-ornaments taken away by Naraka, Thou didst go to the abode of the gods, taking with Thee Satyabhama whose loveliness put the beauties of heaven to shame. Though given a grand reception in heaven by Indra, Thou hadst to put him down when he resisted Thee as Thou, at the desire of Satyabhama, didst want to take away the Kalpataru (wish-yielding tree of heaven) from his abode. Thou didst this in order to illustrate the evil arising from the pride generated by prosperity (as in the case of Indra).

कल्पद्रुं सत्यभामाभवनभुवि सृजन् द्व्यष्टसाहस्रयोषाः
स्वीकृत्य प्रत्यगारं विहितबहुवपुर्लालयन् केलिभेदैः
आश्चर्यान्नारदालोकित-विविधगति-स्तत्र तत्रापि गेहे
भूयः सर्वासु कुर्वन् दश दश तनयान् पाहि वातालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. After planting the Kalpataru in Satyabhama's house, Thou didst take as Thy wives all the sixteen thousand women (released from Naraka's prison), live and sport with them simultaneously in their different houses by assuming as many bodies, astonish Narada by revealing Thyself thus engaged at the same time in different houses in different activities, and beget ten issues in each of these wives. May, Thou, the Lord of Guruvayoor (noted for such super-human acts), be gracious to protect me!

CANTO 82

CONQUEST OF BANASURA

प्रद्युम्नो रौक्मिणेयः स खलु तव कला शम्बरेणाहृतस्तं
हत्वा रत्या सहाप्तो निजपुरमहरद्‌-रुक्मिकन्यां च धन्याम् ।
तत्पुत्रोऽथानिरुद्धो गुणनिधिरवहद्‌-रोचनां रुक्मिपौत्रीं
तत्रोद्वाहे गतस्त्वं न्यवधि मुसलिना रुक्म्यपि द्यूतवैरात् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Pradyumna, the son of Rukmini, and an aspect of Thy divine essence, was kidnapped even at birth by Sambara through his magical powers. But on reaching adulthood, Pradyumna killed Sambara, returned to Dwaraka with his wife Rati, and then took away by force his uncle Rukmi's noble-minded daughter Rukmavati, too, as another wife. Afterwards Pradyumna's son Aniruddha married a granddaughter of Rukmi. In the course of a quarrel in a game of dice during these marriage festivities Balarama killed Rukmi.

बाणस्य सा बलिसुतस्य सहस्रबाहो-
र्माहेश्वरस्य महिता दुहिता किलोषा ।
त्वत्पौत्रमेन-मनिरुद्ध-मदृष्टपूर्वं
स्वप्नेऽनुभूय भगवन् विरहातुराऽभूत् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Bali's son Bana, who possessed thousand arms and was devoted to Siva, had a daughter named Usha who was held in esteem by all. She developed love for Thy grandson Aniruddha and suffered from pangs of separation, although she had never seen him in life but only in dream.

योगिन्यतीव कुशला खलु चित्रलेखा
तस्याः सखी विलिखती तरुणानशेषान् ।
तत्रानिरुद्ध-मुषया विदितं निशाया-
मानेष्ट योगबलतो भवतो निकेतात् ॥ 3 ॥

3. She had a friend named Chitralekha, who was skilled in drawing portraits (even as her name indicated) as also

in the exercise of Yogic powers. She drew the likenesses of all celebrated youths, from among whom Usha was able to pick out Aniruddha, whom Chitralekha thereupon brought from Thy palace by the exercise of her Yogic powers.

कन्यापुरे दयितया सुखमारमन्तं चैनं कथञ्चन बबन्धुषि शर्वबन्धौ ।
श्रीनारदोक्त-तदुदन्त-दुरन्तरोषै-स्त्वं तस्य शोणितपुरं यदुभिर्निरुन्धाः ॥

4. Aniruddha thereafter lived happily in the women's quarters of the palace until one day he came to the notice of Bana, who seized him and tied him up. Being informed of the fate of Aniruddha by Narada, Thou wert roused to great fury and didst march on Bana's capital of Sonitapura with a huge army of Yadus.

पुरीपाल: शैलप्रियदुहितृ-नाथोऽस्य भगवान्
समं भूतव्रातै-र्यदुबलमशङ्कं निरुरुधे ।
महाप्राणो बाणो झटिति युयुधानेन युयुधे
गुहः प्रद्युम्नेन त्वमपि पुरहन्त्रा जघटिषे ॥ 5 ॥

5. Lord Siva, the consort of the daughter of the mountain, who protected the city, faced the attacking Yadus with his army of Bhutas. Powerful Bana encountered Yuyudhana, Guha resisted Pradyumna, and Lord Siva opposed Thee in battle.

निरुद्धाशेषास्त्रे मुमुहुषि तवास्त्रेण गिरिशे
द्रुता भूता भीताः प्रमथकुलवीराः प्रमथिताः ।
परास्कन्दत् स्कन्दः कुसुमशरबाणैश्च सचिवः
स कुम्भाण्डो भाण्डं नवमिव बलेनाशु बिभिदे ॥ 6 ॥

6. Resisting all the arrows of Lord Siva, Thou didst strike him down unconscious while the frightened Bhutas and their leaders ran away helter-skelter, being badly mauled by the Yadus. Skanda (Guha) took to his heels before the arrows of Pradyumna, and Kumbhanda, the minister of Bana, was smashed by Balarama like a new pot.

चापानां पञ्चशत्या प्रसभमुपगते छिन्नचापेऽथ बाणे
व्यर्थे याते समेतो ज्वरपतिरशनैरज्वरि त्वज्ज्वरेण ।
ज्ञानी स्तुत्वाऽथ दत्वा तव चरितजुषां विज्वरं स ज्वरोऽगात्
प्रायोऽन्तर्ज्ञानवन्तोऽपि च बहुतमसा रौद्रचेष्टा हि रौद्राः ।। 7 ।।

7. Bana now came to attack with five hundred bows and arrows (in his thousand arms), but these weapons of his being cut to pieces, he had to beat a retreat. Thereupon Saiva-fever, the lord of all fevers, came to the fore-front, but was put out by Vaishnava-fever. Having thus understood Thy greatness, Saiva-fever sang Thy praise and was allowed to go with the instruction never to attack devotees who sing Thy praise. Devotees of Siva, though possessed of knowledge, are often seen to be ferocious in action on account of Tamas.

बाणं नानायुधोग्रं पुनरभिपतितं दर्पदोषाद्वितन्वन्
निर्लूनाशेषदोषं सपदि बुबुधुषा शङ्करेणोपगीतः
तद्वाचा शिष्टबाहु--द्वितयमुभयतो निर्भयं तत्प्रियं तं
मुक्त्वा तद्दत्तमानो निजपुरमगमः सानिरुद्धः सहोषः ।। 8 ।।

8. Bana, corrupted by pride, made another attack, formidable due to the numerous destructive weapons he was equipped with, but Thou didst rid him of all his corruptions (by inflicting a crushing defeat). At the prayer and intercession of Siva on behalf of his devotee (which Bana was), he was spared from the fear of death and released but with all his arms except two lopped off.

मुहुस्तावच्छक्रं वरुणमजयो नन्दहरणे
यमं बालानीतौ दवदहनपानेऽनिलसखम् ।
विधिं वत्सस्तेये गिरिशमिह बाणस्य समरे
विभो विश्वोत्कर्षी तदयमवतारो जयति ते ।। 9 ।।

9. Thou didst win victories over Indra again and again; over Varuna when Thou didst rescue Nanda from him; over Yama when Thou didst bring Thy teacher's children

from his realm; over Agni (deity of fire) when Thou didst drink the forest fire; over Brahma when he stole the calves; and over Siva in this fight with Bana. Thus, O Lord! (by these victories over all gods and deities) this Incarnation of Thine shines supreme in its glory.

द्विजरुषा कृकलासवपुर्धरं नृगनृपं त्रिदिवालय-मापयन् ।
निजजने द्विजभक्तिमनुत्तमा-मुपदिशन् पवनेश्वर पाहि माम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. King Nriga, who had been reduced to the state of a chameleon by the anger of some Brahmanas, was purified and raised to heaven by Thee. O Lord of Guruvayoor who didst teach Thy devotees the lesson of respect for holy men—may Thou be pleased to save me!

CANTO 83

SALVATION OF PAUNḌRAKA

रामेऽथ गोकुलगते प्रमदाप्रसक्ते हूतानुपेतयमुना-दमने मदान्धे ।
स्वैरं समारमति सेवकवादमूढो दूतं न्ययुङ्क्त तव पौण्ड्रकवासुदेवः ॥

1. At a time when Balarama had left Dwaraka for Gokula where he changed the course of the Yamuna (with his plough weapon) for the convenience of holding water sports, there came a messenger to Thee from Paundraka Vasudeva, king of Karusha, who was misguided by the bad advice of his flattering confidants.

नारायणोऽह-मवतीर्ण इहास्मि भूमौ
धत्से किल त्वमपि मामकलक्षणानि ।
उत्सृज्य तानि शरणं व्रज मामिति त्वां
दूतो जगाद सकलै-र्हसितः सभायाम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. 'I am Narayana incarnated on earth. It is reported that you also are bearing my divine emblems (like the conch, discus etc.). Abandoning them, become subservient to me.'

Thus did the messenger speak to Thee (on behalf of Paundraka), much to the amusement of all in the assembly.

दूतेऽथ यातवति यादवसैनिकैस्त्वं
यातो ददर्शिथ वपुः किल पौण्ड्रकीयम् ।
तापेन वक्षसि कृताङ्कमनल्पमूल्य-
श्रीकौस्तुभं मकरकुण्डल-पीतचेलम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. After the messenger had departed, Thou didst go to the capital of Paundraka with an army of Yadavas, and there see the ridiculous form of Paundraka (in imitation of Thine), having a burnt mark on the chest in simulation of Srivatsa and a costly gem round the neck in the place of Kausthubha, besides fish-marked ear ornaments and an yellow silk.

कालायसं निजसुदर्शन-मस्यतोऽस्य
कालानलोत्करकिरेण सुदर्शनेन ।
शीर्षं चकर्तिथ ममर्दिथ चास्य सेनां
तन्मित्र-काशिपशिरोऽपि चकर्थ काश्याम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. When Paundraka threw his discus made of iron at Thee, Thou didst cut off his head with Thy discus Sudarsana, emitting flames like the fire of cosmic destruction. Then Thou didst destroy his army, and also hurl the head of his ally, the king of Kasi, into the soil of Kasi itself.

जाड्येन बालकगिराऽपि किलाहमेव
श्रीवासुदेव इति रूढमतिश्चिरं सः ।
सायुज्यमेव भवदैक्यधिया गतोऽभूत्
को नाम कस्य सुकृतं कथमित्यवेयात् ॥ 5 ॥

5. It may be due to stupidity that, believing the words of youngsters, he thought himself to be the real Vasudeva. But this had been his firm belief for a long time, and so, because of this sense of oneness with Thee, he attained to Sayujya. Who knows what store of good deeds lies to any one's credit?

काशीश्वरस्य तनयोऽथ सुदक्षिणाख्यः
शर्वं प्रपूज्य भवते विहिताभिचारः ।
कृत्यानलं कमपि बाणरणातिभीतै-
र्भूतैः कथञ्चन वृतैः सममभ्यमुञ्चत् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Sudakshina, the son of the king of Kasi (infuriated by his father's slaughter), propitiated Siva, and under his instruction performed an *Abhichara* (a rite of black magic) to kill Thee. A fiery and fierce evil spirit (born of the sacrificial fire) was released against Thee along with several of those Bhutas that had run away and escaped on the occasion of the battle with Bana, and now mobilised with great difficulty.

तालप्रमाणचरणा-मखिलं दहन्तीं
कृत्यां विलोक्य चकितैः कथितोऽपि पौरैः ।
द्यूतोत्सवे किमपि नो चलितो विभो त्वं
पार्श्वस्थमाशु विससर्जिथ कालचक्रम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Seeing that evil spirit (Kritya), with legs of the size of a palm tree, burning up everything on the way, the frightened citizens conveyed to Thee the news of this danger. But without stirring from Thy seat at the game of dice in which Thou wert then absorbed, Thou didst release, O Lord, Thy all-destroying discus Sudarsana that was near at hand.

अभ्यापत-त्यमितधाम्नि भवन्महास्त्रे
हा हेति विद्रुतवती खलु घोरकृत्या ।
रोषात् सुदक्षिण-मदक्षिणचेष्टितं तं
पुप्लोष चक्रमपि काशिपुरीमधाक्षीत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Confronted by Thy discus of inconceivable brilliance, the evil spirit cried out in terror and distress, and rushing back, burnt Sudakshina himself for his action,—which was contrary to the instruction of Siva. And Thy discus in turn burnt up the city of Kasi.

स खलु विविदो रक्षोघाते कृतोपकृतिः पुरा
तव तु कलया मृत्युं प्राप्तुं तदा खलतां गतः ।
नरकसचिवो देशक्लेशं सृजन् नगरान्तिके
झटिति हलिना युद्धयन्नद्धा पपात तलाहतः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Vivida, one of the monkeys who had helped Thee in the destruction of Rakshasas (in Thy incarnation as Rama), desired to be killed by Balarama (Thy aspect and counterpart). So assuming the role of a wicked person and becoming an agent of Narakasura, he began to attack and oppress people (in the neighbourhood of Dwaraka), whereupon he was encountered in battle by Balarama and killed by a blow of his hand.

साम्बं कौरव्यपुत्री-हरणनियमितं सान्त्वनार्थी कुरूणां
यात-स्तद्वाक्यरोषोद्-धृतकरिनगरो मोचयामास रामः ।
ते घात्याः पाण्डवेयैरिति यदुपृतनां नामुचस्त्वं तदानीं
तं त्वां दुर्बोधलीलं पवनपुरपते तापशान्त्यै निषेवे ॥ 10 ॥

10. By threatening to destroy Hasthinapura with his plough-weapon, Balarama effected the release of Samba who had been kept in captivity by the Kauravas for abducting Lakshana, the daughter of Duryodhana (at the Swayamvara held to give her away in marriage). Realising that the Kauravas were to be destroyed by the Pandavas, Thou didst not send the army of Yadus against them. O Lord of Guruvayoor, whose playful ways are inscrutable,—I adore Thee for the eradication of all my woes.

CANTO 84

PILGRIMAGE TO SAMANTAPANCHAKA

क्वचिदथ तपनोपरागकाले पुरि निदधत् कृतवर्मकामसूनू ।
यदुकुलमहिलावृतः सुतीर्थं समुपगतोऽसि समन्तपञ्चकाख्यम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. Once during the time of a solar eclipse, leaving Kritavarman and Pradyumna in charge of Dwaraka, Thou didst go to the holy spot known as Samantapanchaka with all the Yadavas and their womenfolk.

बहुतरजनताहिताय तत्र त्वमपि पुनन् विनिमज्य तीर्थतोयम् ।
द्विजगणपरिमुक्त-वित्तराशिः सममिलथाः कुरुपाण्डवादिमित्रैः ॥ 2 ॥

2. For the good of the large number of people who had gathered there, Thou didst sanctify the holy waters of the place by taking Thy bath therein, then distribute much wealth among Brahmanas and next move about and mix with friends like the Pandavas, Kauravas and others.

तव खलु दयिताजनैः समेता द्रुपदसुता त्वयि गाढभक्तिभारा ।
तदुदित-भवदाहृतिप्रकारै-रतिमुमुदे सममन्यमानिनीभिः ॥ 3 ॥

3. There Draupadi, the wife of the Pandavas, who was highly devoted to Thee, mixed closely with Thy wives, and heard from them with much interest, along with other women, accounts of how they were brought and married by Thee.

तदनु च भगवन् निरीक्ष्य गोपा-नतिकुतुका-दुपगम्य मानयित्वा ।
चिरतर-विरहातुराङ्गरेखाः पशुपवधूः सरसं त्वमन्वयासीः ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord! Thereafter, seeing the Gopas, Thou didst approach them with great joy and respect, and then enthusiastically follow their women (the Gopikas) who had become much emaciated through the sorrow of separation from Thee.

सपदि च भवदीक्षणोत्सवेन प्रमुषितमानहृदां नितम्बिनीनाम् ।
अतिरसपरिमुक्त-कञ्चुलीके परिचय-हृद्यतरे कुचे न्यलैषीः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Immediately on seeing Thee, their chagrin at Thy keeping Thyself away from them all along disappeared, and with the overwhelming joy that welled up within, their brassières burst, revealing their familiar breasts which Thou didst clasp in tight embrace.

रिपुजनकलहैः पुनः पुनर्मे समुपगतैरियती विलम्बनाऽभूत् ।
इति कृतपरिरम्भणे त्वयि द्रा-गतिविवशा खलु राधिका निलिल्ये ॥

6. 'It was the frequent conflicts with foes that delayed my meeting you all these days.' When with these words Thou didst embrace Radhika, Thy dearest among the Gopikas, she became dissolved in Thee through overpowering love.

अपगत-विरहव्यथा-स्तदा ता रहसि विधाय ददाथ तत्त्वबोधम् ।
परमसुख-चिदात्मकोऽहमात्मे-त्युदयतु वः स्फुटमेव चेतसीति ॥ 7 ॥

7. Having thus assuaged in solitude the grief of the Gopikas arising from their separation from Thee, Thou didst bless them so as to generate in them the realisation of the Truth that Thou, of the nature of Supreme Consciousness-Bliss, art their Innermost Self (never separate and never away from them).

सुखरस-परिमिश्रितो वियोगः किमपि पुराऽभव-दुद्धवोपदेशैः ।
समभवदमुतः परं तु तासां परमसुखैक्यमयी भवद्विचिन्ता ॥ 8 ॥

8. By the instruction given through Uddhava on a former occasion, love in separation had become partly delightful to them. But after Thy present instruction the very thought of Thee (irrespective of physical separation or union) became sufficient for them to be united with the unalloyed and Supreme Bliss that is Brahman.

मुनिवरनिवहैस्तवाथ पित्रा दुरितशमाय शुभानि पृच्छ्यमानैः ।
त्वयि सति किमिदं शुभान्तरैरि-त्युरुहसितैरपि याजितस्तदासौ ॥ 9 ॥

9. Subsequently Thy father Vasudeva asked the sages what auspicious rites had to be performed as atonement for all sins. The sages, though they felt amused and laughed at such a request from one who had Thee as his son, helped him none-the-less to perform the sacrifices usually done for such purposes.

सुमहति यजने वितायमाने प्रमुदितमित्रजने सहैव गोपाः ।
यदुजनमहिता-स्त्रिमासमात्रं भवदनुषङ्गरसं पुरेव भेजुः ॥ 10 ॥

10. During the three months that the performance of the great sacrificial rite lasted, the Gopas stayed at the place as the honoured guests of the Yadus, along with other friends and

relatives gathered there in a festive mood, and could thereby enjoy the bliss of Thy company as of old.

व्यपगमसमये समेत्य राधां दृढमुपगूह्य निरीक्ष्य वीतखेदाम् ।
प्रमुदितहृदयः पुरं प्रयातः पवनपुरेश्वर पाहि मां गदेभ्यः ॥ 11 ॥

11. At the time of leave-taking, when Thou didst hold Radha in Thy embrace, Thou wert glad to note that she was free from all sorrow of separation (as she had realised Thy eternal presence in her heart).[26] O Lord of Guruvayoor, Thou who didst then return to Thy city—may Thou be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 85

RAJASUYA SACRIFICE

ततो मगधभूभृता चिरनिरोध-संक्लेशितं
शताष्टकयुतायुत-द्वितयमीश भूमीभृताम् ।
अनाथशरणाय ते कमपि पूरुषं प्राहिणो-
दयाचत स मागध-क्षपणमेव किं भूयसा ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord! Some twenty thousand and eight hundred members of royal dynasties, rotting in the prison of Jarasandha, the king of Magadha, sent a messenger to Thee, the sole refuge of all the helpless and the suppressed, beseeching Thee to destroy the king of Magadha (in order to save the world from oppression).

यियासु-रभिमागधं तदनु नारदोदीरिता-
द्युधिष्ठिर-मखोद्यमा-दुभयकार्यपर्याकुलः ।
विरुद्धजयिनोध्वरा-दुभयसिद्धिरित्युद्धवे
शशंसुषि निजैः समं पुरमियेथ यौधिष्ठिरीम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. While Thou wert getting ready for a campaign against the king of Magadha, sage Narada brought the news that Yudhishthira was preparing for the performance of the Rajasuya sacrifice. Being in a fix to decide which of these

two undertakings Thou shouldst attend to, Thou didst finally start for the capital of Yudhishthira with Thy followers on the advice of Uddhava, who pointed out that both the purposes could be accomplished simultaneously, as the sacrifice had to be done after the conquest of all opponents.

अशेषदयितायुते त्वयि समागते धर्मजो
विजित्य सहजैर्महीं भवदपाङ्गसंवर्धितैः ।
श्रियं निरुपमां वहन्नहह भक्तदासायितं
भवन्तमयि मागधे प्रहितवान् सभीमार्जुनम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. When Thou with Thy sixteen thousand and eight wives didst reach the capital of Yudhishthira for the sacrificial festival, the latter had, with the help of his brothers whose strength had been enhanced by Thy gracious glance, conquered the neighbouring lands and amassed immense wealth (as preparation for the sacrifice). Now he (Yudhishthira) commissioned Thee, the ever ready servant of devotees, along with Arjuna and Bhima, to subjugate king Jarasandha of Magadha.

गिरिव्रजपुरं गतास्तदनु देव यूयं त्रयो
ययाच समरोत्सवं द्विजमिषेण तं मागधम् ।
अपूर्णसुकृतं त्वमुं पवनजेन संग्रामयन्
निरीक्ष्य सह जिष्णुना त्वमपि राजयुद्ध्वा स्थितः ॥ 4 ॥

4. O Lord! Afterwards Thou didst go with Arjuna and Bhima to the city of Girivraja, the capital of Jarasandha, disguised as three Brahmanas, and seek from Jarasandha the boon of a combat which would be delightful to the eyes of onlookers. Not being fortunate enough to die at Thy hands, Jarasandha chose Bhima as his opponent whilst Thou with Arjuna looked on, witnessing the fight between these two scions of royal families.

अशान्तसमरोद्धतं विटपपाटनासंज्ञया
निपात्य जरसः सुतं पवनजेन निष्पाटितम् ।
विमुच्य नृपतीन् मुदा समनुगृह्य भक्तिं परां
दिदेशिथ गतस्पृहानपि च धर्मगुप्त्यै भुवः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Noticing the exaltation of Jarasandha in that fierce and protracted contest, Thou didst hint to Bhima, by splitting a twig, that Jarasandha could be killed only by tearing him into two halves. Bhima did accordingly and threw him on the ground. Then the imprisoned kings were released and were blessed with devotion, attaining which they lost all interest in worldly matters. Yet they were entrusted with their kingdoms for the protection of Dharma in this world.

प्रचक्रुषि युधिष्ठिरे तदनु राजसूयाध्वरं
प्रसन्नभृतकीभवत्-सकलराजकव्याकुलम् ।
त्वमप्ययि जगत्पते द्विजपदावनेजादिकं
चकर्थ किमु कथ्यते नृपवरस्य भाग्योन्नतिः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Yudhishthira then began the performance of Rajasuya sacrifice, during which all the assembled kings joyfully worked as servants performing the tasks allotted to them. As for Thyself, Thou wert engaged in washing the feet of Brahmana guests and the like. Imagine how great was the good fortune of Yudhishthira!

ततः सवनकर्मणि प्रवरमग्र्यपूजाविधिं
विचार्य सहदेववागनुगतः स धर्मात्मजः ।
व्यधत्त भवते मुदा सदसि विश्वभूतात्मने
तदा ससुरमानुषं भुवनमेव तृप्तिं दधौ ॥ 7 ॥

7. As an essential part of the sacrificial rite, Yudhishthira, after due consideration, accepted the advice of Sahadeva to perform Agrapuja (worship of the most noteworthy) to Thee, and when he did perform this worship to Thee, the soul of all the worlds, everyone in this wide universe, be he god or man, felt great mental satisfaction.

ततः सपदि चेदिपो मुनिनृपेषु तिष्ठत्स्वहो
सभाजयति को जडः पशुपदुर्दुरूटं वटुम् ।
इति त्वयि स दुर्वचो-विततिमुद्वमन्नासना-
दुदापतदुदायुधः समपतन्नमुं पाण्डवाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. Then Sisupala, the king of the Chedis, sprang up from his seat, flourishing his weapon and spitting words of abuse at Thee. 'In this assembly of sages and kings', he exclaimed, 'which fool would select for this place of honour a fellow like this—a dwarf, a cowherd and the most corrupt even among them at that!' The sons of Pandu thereupon came forward to confront him.

निवार्य निजपक्षगा-नभिमुखस्य विद्वेषिण-
स्त्वमेव जहृषे शिरो दनुजदारिणा स्वारिणा ।
जनुस्त्रितयलब्धया सततचिन्तया शुद्धधी-
स्त्वया स परमेकतामधृत योगिनां दुर्लभाम् ।। 9 ।।

9. Elbowing away Thy allies, the Pandavas, Thou didst face the advancing adversary and cut off his head with Thy divine discus, noted for the destruction it has wrought among wicked Asuras. Being purified by constant thought of Thee (by way of communion through confrontation) in three births (as Hiranyakasipu, as Ravana and as Sisupala), he gained union with Thee, which is so difficult of attainment even for Yogis.

ततः सुमहिते त्वया क्रतुवरे निरूढे जनो
ययौ जयति धर्मजो जयति कृष्ण इत्यालपन् ।
खलः स तु सुयोधनो धुतमनाः सपत्नश्रिया
मयार्पितसभामुखे स्थलजलभ्रमादभ्रमीत् ।। 10 ।।

10. When the Rajasuya sacrifice, the most holy and the most elaborate of its kind, was completed, all people returned to their places loudly acclaiming Thee and Yudhishthira. But on the other hand, wicked Duryodhana was mortified by jealousy at the sight of the prosperity of his enemies, the Pandavas, as also by the confusing experience he had to undergo by the impossibility of distinguishing between land and water in front of the magic hall built by Maya for the Pandavas.

तदा हसितमुत्थितं द्रुपदनन्दनाभीमयो-
रपाङ्गकलया विभो किमपि तावदुज्जृम्भयन् ।

धराभरनिराकृतौ सपदि नाम बीजं वपन्
जनार्दन मरुत्पुरीनिलय पाहि मामामयात् ॥ 11 ॥

11. O Lord! When Duryodhana fell into water in this confused situation, Bhima and Draupadi laughed loudly at him. O Lord of Guruvayoor— Thou who didst encourage their derisive laughter by a slight movement of Thy sidelong glance, and thereby sow the seeds of the destructive Mahabharata war for ridding the earth of its burdens—may Thou be pleased to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 86

KURUKSHETRA WAR

साल्वो भैष्मीविवाहे यदुबलविजितश्चन्द्रचूडाद्विमानं
विन्दन् सौभं स मायी त्वयि वसति कुरूंस्त्वत्पुरी-मभ्यभाङ्क्षीत् ।
प्रद्युम्नस्तं निरुन्ध-न्निखिलयदुभटैर्न्यग्रही-दुग्रवीर्यं
तस्यामात्यं द्युमन्तं व्यजनि च समरः सप्तविंशत्यहान्तम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. The king of Salvas, an adept in magical warfare, who had been defeated by the Yadavas at the time of the abduction of Rukmini, got as a boon from Siva an aerial car called Saubha. At the time when Thou hadst gone to the Kuru country (for the Rajasuya sacrifice), Salva attacked Thy city of Dwaraka and was resisted by the Yadava army headed by Pradyumna who killed Dyuman, the powerful minister of Salva. The battle with Salva lasted for twenty seven days.

तावत्त्वं रामशाली त्वरितमुपगतः खण्डितप्रायसैन्यं
सौभेशं तं न्यरुन्धाः स च किल गदया शार्ङ्गमभ्रंशयत्ते ।
मायातातं व्यहिंसीदपि तव पुरतस्तत् त्वयापि क्षणार्धं
नान्वज्ञायीत्याहुरेके तदिदमवमतं व्यास एव न्यषेधीत् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Much of the invading army had been destroyed (by Pradyumna and others) when Thou hurriedly arrived at

Dwaraka along with Balarama and faced Salva, the master of aerial and magical warfare. Thereupon Salva with a stroke of his mace knocked off the bow Sarnga from Thy hands, and besides, in Thy presence, cut off the head of a likeness of Thy father he had created by his magical powers. Some say that even Thou, the master of Maya, wert for a moment deceived by this illusion, but the sage Vyasa has denied it (in the Bhagavata).

क्षिप्त्वा सौभं गदाचूर्णित-मुदकनिधौ मङ्क्षु साल्वेपि चक्रे-
णोत्कृत्ते दन्तवक्त्रः प्रसभ-मभिपतन्नभ्यमुञ्चद्-गदां ते
कौमोदक्या हतोऽसावपि सुकृतनिधि-श्चैद्यवत्प्रापदैक्यं
सर्वेषामेष पूर्वं त्वयि धृतमनसां मोक्षणार्थोऽवतारः ॥ 3 ॥

3. The aerial car of Saubha was smashed with a mace and thrown into the sea, and Salva's head was then cut off with Thy discus Sudarsana, whereupon Dantavaktra (a close friend and associate of Sisupala) struck at Thee with his mace. Dantavaktra was indeed fortunate in doing so, for he was killed by Thee with Thy mace Kaumodaki, and like Sisupala of Chedi and others killed by Thee, attained union with Thee. For lo! this Incarnation of Thine as Krishna was meant to give salvation to all who had bestowed their minds on Thee in any relationship (be it of love, fear, or hatred).

त्वय्यायातेऽथ जाते किल कुरुसदसि द्यूतके संयतायाः
क्रन्दन्त्या याज्ञसेन्याः सकरुणमकृथा-श्चेलमालामनन्ताम् ।
अन्नान्तप्राप्त-शर्वांशज-मुनिचकित-द्रौपदी-चिन्तितोऽथ
प्राप्तः शाकान्नमश्नन् मुनिजनमकृथा-स्तृप्तिमन्तं वनान्ते ॥ 4 ॥

4. After Thy return from Indraprastha, there took place a contest at dice between the Pandavas and the Kauravas, in which, through foul play, the former were forced to pawn all their possessions, including their wife Draupadi, whose modesty the Kurus thereupon attempted to outrage by stripping her of her clothes in the open assembly, in which situation Draupadi, wailing piteously, appealed to Thee for help and was mercifully saved by Thy endowing her with clothing of endless length. Further, in the forest, when Draupadi, frightened by the prospect of imminent curse from Durvasas,

who had arrived with his large retinue for food when there was no more food to be served for the day, prayed to Thee for help, Thou didst then appear in the forest and save her and the Pandavas from danger by eating a bit of boiled leaf left over, thereby satisfying the hunger of the sage and all his following.

युद्धोद्योगेऽथ मन्त्रे मिलति सति वृतः फल्गुनेन त्वमेकः
कौरव्ये दत्तसैन्यः करिपुरमगमो दौत्यकृत् पाण्डवार्थम् ।
भीष्मद्रोणादिमान्ये तव खलु वचने धिक्कृते कौरवेण
व्यावृण्वन् विश्वरूपं मुनिसदसि पुरीं क्षोभयित्वागतोऽभूः ॥ 5 ॥

5. After the return of the Pandavas from the forest when preparations for war and diplomatic moves were on, Thou didst agree to Arjuna's request to serve on the side of the Pandavas Thyself, while lending all Thy army to the Kauravas. Then assuming the role of an emissary of the Pandavas, Thou didst go to Hastinapura, the capital of the Kauravas, with a formula for peace, which, though found acceptable by their wise men like Bhishma and Drona, was rejected by Duryodhana, whereupon Thou didst shake up the whole of Hastinapura by revealing Thy awful Cosmic Form in that assembly attended by wise men.

जिष्णोस्त्वं कृष्ण सूतः खलु समरमुखे बन्धुघाते दयालुं
खिन्नं तं वीक्ष्य वीरं किमिदमयि सखे नित्य एकोऽयमात्मा ।
को वध्यः कोऽत्र हन्ता तदिह वधभियं प्रोज्झ्य मय्यर्पितात्मा
धर्म्यं युद्धं चरेति प्रकृतिमनयथा दर्शयन् विश्वरूपम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. O Krishna! In Thy role as Arjuna's charioteer, on seeing that hero dejected on the battle front from the thought of the evils of fratricidal war, Thou didst say to him, 'O friend, the Atman is the eternal and all-comprehending one. Who then is the killed and who the killer? Giving up therefore all vain fear about death and killing, surrender yourself to Me and engage yourself in this righteous war?' Advising Arjuna in this way, Thou didst reveal to him Thy all-inclusive Cosmic Form and restore him to a balanced state of mind.

भक्तोत्तंसेऽथ भीष्मे तव धरणिभरक्षेप-कृत्यैकसक्ते
नित्यं नित्यं विभिन्द-त्यवनिभृदयुतं प्राप्तसादे च पार्थे।
निश्शस्त्रत्वप्रतिज्ञां विजहदरिवरं धारयन् क्रोधशाली-
वाधावन् प्राञ्जलिं तं नतशिरसमथो वीक्ष्य मोदादपागाः ॥ 7 ॥

7. As the war progressed, Bhishma, the greatest of Thy devotees, was co-operating with Thy mission of lightening the earth's burden by destroying more than ten thousand royal warriors daily. Arjuna (resisting him) fell unconscious in combat with him. Then, as if forgetting in anger Thy vow not to touch any weapon in the war, and taking up Thy discus Sudarsana, Thou didst rush at Bhishma to kill him, whereupon seeing him (Bhishma) receiving Thee with head bent down in prostration and hands held in salutation, Thou didst desist from the attack, overjoyed at the thought that Thy devotee's vow had been fulfilled in preference to Thine.

युद्धे द्रोणस्य हस्तिस्थिररण-भगदत्तेरितं वैष्णवास्त्रं
वक्षस्याधत्त चक्रस्थगितरविमहाः प्रार्दयत्सिन्धुराजम्।
नागास्त्रे कर्णमुक्ते क्षितिमवनमयन् केवलं कृत्तमौलिं
तत्रे तत्रापि पार्थं किमिव नहि भवान् पाण्डवानामकार्षीत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. During the period of Drona's generalship, Thou didst attract to Thy own chest the Vaishnava missile of Bhagadatta, who was fighting seated securely on the back of his four-tusked elephant. By hiding the sun with Thy Sudarsana and creating artificial dusk, Thou didst enable Arjuna to kill Jayadratha, the king of Sindhu (who was mainly responsible for the treacherous slaughter of Abhimanyu). When Karna used the Naga missile at Arjuna, Thou didst save him by lowering the earth by the pressure of Thy toes, so that the missile severed only Arjuna's crown and not his head. Is there anything that Thou didst not do to help the Pandavas in times of distress!

युद्धादौ तीर्थगामी स खलु हलधरो नैमिशक्षेत्रमृच्छ-
न्नप्रत्युत्थायिसूत-क्षयकृदथ सुतं तत्पदे कल्पयित्वा।

यज्ञघ्नं बल्वलं पर्वणि परिदलयन् स्नाततीर्थो रणान्ते

सम्प्राप्तो भीमदुर्योधन-रणमशमं वीक्ष्य यातः पुरीं ते ॥ 9 ॥

9. Balarama who had started on a pilgrimage at the very commencement of the war, first went to the holy place called Naimisaranya, where he struck dead the Suta, who did not honour him by getting up at his approach, and installed the Suta's son in his stead. Then he destroyed an Asura named Balwala who used to disturb the sacrificial rites of the ascetics on every full moon and new moon day. Completing his visit to several other holy spots, he arrived in Kurukshetra towards the close of the war, and on seeing that the protracted combat between Bhima and Duryodhana was unending, returned to Dwaraka.

संसुप्तद्रौपदेय-क्षपणहतधियं द्रौणिमेत्य त्वदुक्त्या

तन्मुक्तं ब्राह्ममस्त्रं समहृत विजयो मौलिरत्नं च जह्रे ।

उच्छित्यै पाण्डवानां पुनरपि च विशत्युत्तरागर्भमस्त्रे

रक्ष-न्नङ्गुष्ठमात्रः किल जठरमगा-श्चक्रपाणिर्विभो त्वम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. The evil-minded Aswatthama, the son of Drona, murdered the sons of Draupadi who were fast asleep (in their camp at the close of the war). In the morning Arjuna went in pursuit of Aswatthama, but in the combat that followed, he retracted, at Thy command, the Brahma missile hurled by Aswatthama and made him captive but released him after clipping off his crest-jewel as punishment. Aswatthama again released the Brahma missile, this time to destroy the foetus in the womb of Uttara, the daughter-in-law of the Pandavas, thus to extinguish the line of the Pandavas by destroying their only hope of progeny; but Thou, O Lord, in order to protect the foetus, entered the womb of Uttara, assuming the size of a thumb and holding the Sudarsana in hand.

धर्मौघं धर्मसूनो-रभिदधदखिलं छन्दमृत्युः स भीष्म-

स्त्वां पश्यन् भक्तिभूम्नैव हि सपदि ययौ निष्कलब्रह्मभूयम् ।

संयाज्याथाश्वमेधै-स्त्रिभिरतिमहितै-र्धर्मजं पूर्णकामं

सम्प्राप्तो द्वारकां त्वं पवनपुरपते पाहि मां सर्वरोगात् ॥ 11 ॥

11. After instructing Yudhishthira in all aspects of Dharma, Bhishma, who had the power of dying at will, ended his life in Thy presence in a highly devotional mood and attained to the state of indivisible Brahman. Afterwards, in fulfilment of his highest aspiration, Thou didst enable Yudhishthira to perform three great Asvamedha sacrifices and then return to Thy city of Dwaraka. May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor who didst accomplish all this! be pleased to save me from all my ailments!

CANTO 87

KUCHELA EPISODE

कुचेलनामा भवतः सतीर्थ्यतां गतः स सान्दीपनिमन्दिरे द्विजः ।
त्वदेकरागेण धनादिनिस्पृहो दिनानि निन्ये प्रशमी गृहाश्रमी ॥ 1 ॥

1. There was a Brahmana named Kuchela, who was Thy fellow disciple during Thy days as a student at the hermitage of Sandipani. Kuchela became a householder afterwards, and spent his days in the practice of whole-hearted devotion to Thee, without caring for wealth and the like and fully established in control of the mind and the senses.

समानशीलाऽपि तदीयवल्लभा तथैव नो चित्तजयं समेयुषी ।
कदाचिदूचे बत वृत्तिलब्धये रमापतिः किं न सखा निषेव्यते ॥ 2 ॥

2. His wife, who equalled him in character and spiritual aspirations but not in self-control and desirelessness, once asked him why he should not approach his friend Krishna, the Lord of Lakshmi, for some means of livelihood.

इतीरितोऽयं प्रियया क्षुधार्तया जुगुप्समानोऽपि धने मदावहे ।
तदा त्वदालोकन-कौतुकाद्ययौ वहन् पटान्ते पृथुकानुपायनम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Hearing these words of his hungry wife, Kuchela though he abhorred wealth for its proneness to generate pride, none-the-less started for Thy place, owing to

his eagerness to meet Thee. He carried with him, tied up in his cloth, a small quantity of beaten rice as an offering to Thee.

गतोऽयमाश्चर्यमयीं भवत्पुरीं गृहेषु शैब्याभवनं समेयिवान् ।
प्रविश्य वैकुण्ठमिवाप निर्वृतिं तवातिसम्भावनया तु किं पुनः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Reaching Thy wondrous capital and entering the house of Mitravinda, Thy consort, he attained to supreme peace as if he were in Vaikuntha; and further, when Thou didst lavish Thy hospitality on him, he attained to a state of bliss beyond all description.

प्रपूजितं तं प्रियया च वीजितं करे गृहीत्वाऽकथयः पुराकृतम् ।
यदिन्धनार्थं गुरुदारचोदितै-रपर्तुवर्षं तदमर्षि कानने ॥ 5 ॥

5. To him who was comfortably seated after a cordial reception, and was being fanned by Thy consort, Thou didst recall, with his hands held in Thine, the various incidents of student days—how, for instance, once you two were caught in unseasonal rain when you had gone to the forest to gather fuel at the behest of the teacher's wife.

त्रपाजुषोऽस्मात् पृथुकं बलादथ प्रगृह्य मुष्टौ सकृदाशिते त्वया ।
कृतं कृतं नन्वियतेति संभ्रमा-द्रमा किलोपेत्य करं रुरोध ते ॥ 6 ॥

6. From him who was hiding his bundle of beaten rice out of shyness, Thou didst now snatch the same and eat one handful, when Rema (Rukmini) held Thy hand in great consternation, saying 'Enough! enough! Thy liberality has gone far enough!'

भक्तेषु भक्तेन स मानितस्त्वया पुरीं वसन्नेकनिशां महासुखम् ।
बतापरेद्युर्द्रविणं विना ययौ विचित्ररूपस्तव खल्वनुग्रहः ॥ 7 ॥

7. After staying one night in Dwaraka in great joy, attended upon with all solicitude by Thee who art the servant of Thy servants, Kuchela started back home next morning carrying no gift of wealth with him. Strange, indeed, are the ways in which Thy devotees are blessed!

यदि ह्ययाचिष्यमदास्यदच्युतो वदामि भार्यां किमिति व्रजन्नसौ ।
त्वदुक्तिलीला-स्मितमग्नधीः पुनः क्रमादपश्यन् मणिदीप्रमालयम् ॥

8. 'Had I but asked for wealth, Krishna would surely have granted my prayer. What am I to tell my wife now'? As he walked along musing thus, his mind immersed in sweet memories of Thy words, manners and smiling countenance, he reached by and by a mansion of great splendour.

किं मार्गविभ्रंश इति भ्रमन् क्षणं गृहं प्रविष्टः स ददर्श वल्लभाम् ।
सखीपरीतां मणिहेमभूषितां बुबोध च त्वत्करुणां महाद्भुताम् ॥

9. For a moment he stood confused, thinking that he had lost his way. But soon he recognised the building definitely to be his own house and entered it. He was taken aback to see there his wife, adorned with gleaming jewelleries and attended by ladies in waiting. He then understood that all this wonderful transformation was the result of Thy grace.

स रत्नशालासु वसन्नपि स्वयं समुन्नमद्भक्तिभरोऽमृतं ययौ ।
त्वमेवमापूरित-भक्तवाञ्छितो मरुत्पुराधीश हरस्व मे गदान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. The erstwhile poverty-stricken Kuchela now dwelt in a palatial building with resplendent halls, but his heart continued to be moved by the most exalted form of God-love, and he attained to liberation in the end. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Thou who thus dost fulfil the longings of Thy devotees! May Thou be pleased to rid me of my ailments.

CANTO 88

RESTORATION OF THE DEAD CHILDREN

प्रागेवाचार्यपुत्राहृति-निशमनया स्वीयषट्सूनुवीक्षां
कांक्षन्त्या मातुरुक्त्या सुतलभुवि बलिं प्राप्य तेनार्चितस्त्वम् ।
धातुः शापा-द्धिरण्यान्वित-कशिपुभवान् शौरिजान् कंसभग्ना-
नानीयैनान् प्रदर्श्य स्वपदमनयथाः पूर्वपुत्रान्मरीचेः ।। 1 ।।

1. Hearing that Thou hadst restored his dead children to Thy preceptor, Thy mother Devaki desired of Thee to be shown the six children born of her before Thee. So Thou didst go to Sutala where Thou wert honoured by Bali. These six children were originally Marichi's offspring, who because of Brahma's curse were first born of Hiranyakasipu and later took birth as the six infants of Vasudeva in Devaki, whom Kamsa had killed. These were brought and shown to Thy mother by Thee and were then helped to attain to Thy Abode of Vaikuntha.

श्रुतदेव इति श्रुतं द्विजेन्द्रं बहुलाश्वं नृपतिं च भक्तिपूर्णम् ।
युगपत्त्व-मनुग्रहीतुकामो मिथिलां प्रापिथ तापसैः समेतः ।। 2 ।।

2. In order to give Thy blessings simultaneously to Sruta-deva, a famous Brahmana, and to Bahulasva, a king noted for his devotion, Thou didst go to Mithila with many ascetics.

गच्छन् द्विमूर्तिरुभयो-र्युगपन्निकेत-
मेकेन भूरिविभवै-र्विहितोपचारः ।
अन्येन तद्दिनभृतैश्च फलौदनाद्यै-
स्तुल्यं प्रसेदिथ ददाथ च मुक्तिमाभ्याम् ।। 3 ।।

3. Assuming two similar forms, Thou didst visit both of them at the same time, and wert received by the one (the king) with rich offerings, while the other (the Brahmana) had only some fruits and rice collected that day to offer to Thee. Pleased with both alike, Thou didst grant them Mukti (liberation).

भूयोऽथ द्वारवत्यां द्विजतनयमृतिं तत्प्रलापानपि त्वं
को वा दैवं निरुन्ध्या-दिति किल कथयन् विश्ववोढाऽप्यसोढाः ।
जिष्णोर्गर्वं विनेतुं त्वयि मनुजधिया कुण्ठिताश्चास्य बुद्धि
तत्त्वारूढां विधातुं परमतमपद-प्रेक्षणेनेति मन्ये ॥ 4 ॥

4. In Dwaraka there was a Brahmana, who was losing all his children in succession (at their very birth). To the outcries of this distressed father, Thou didst nothing by way of redress, except consoling him with the words that it was all due to fate which none could resist, although Thou wert the Lord of the whole universe (and could accomplish anything at Thy will). I think Thy object in doing so was to rid Arjuna of his pride in his own prowess and also to bestow on him the knowledge of the supreme Truth by disabusing his mind of the obstructing circumstances of looking on Thee as a mere man, through the superhuman feat of revealing the very Vaikuntha to him.

नष्टा अष्टास्य पुत्राः पुनरपि तव तूपेक्षया कष्टवादः
स्पष्टो जातो जनानामथ तदवसरे द्वारकामाप पार्थः ।
मैत्र्या तत्रोषितोऽसौ नवमसुतमृतौ विप्रवर्यप्ररोदं
श्रुत्वा चक्रे प्रतिज्ञामनुपहृतसुतः सन्निवेक्ष्ये कृशानुम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. People began to speak publicly against Thy indifference towards the Brahmana even after he had lost eight infants. At this juncture Arjuna arrived at Dwaraka on a friendly visit, when he happened to hear the bitter lamentation of the Brahmana on the death of his ninth infant. He vowed to restore to life the next infant if born dead, failing which he would immolate himself in fire.

मानी स त्वामपृष्ट्वा द्विजनिलयगतो बाणजालै-र्महास्त्रैः
रुन्धानः सूतिगेहं पुनरपि सहसा दृष्टनष्टे कुमारे ।
याम्यामैन्द्रीं तथान्याः सुरवरनगरी-र्विद्ययाऽऽसाद्य सद्यो
मोघोद्योगः पतिष्यन् हुतभुजि भवता सस्मितं वारितोऽभूत् ॥ 6 ॥

6. The proud man that Arjuna was, he went to the house of the Brahmana without telling Thee (when the tenth child was about to be born). To prevent the entry of any being, he put up a protective wall round the labour room with his arrows, both ordinary and divine, but lo! this time even the body of the child disappeared at the very birth. Arjuna made a vigorous search for the infant, with the help of his Yogic powers, in the realms of Yama, Indra and all other celestial beings, but failing to locate the infant, made himself ready for self-immolation in fire, when Thou, with a smile on Thy face, didst restrain him from doing so.

साधं तेन प्रतीचीं दिशमतिजविना स्यन्दनेनाभियातो
लोकालोकं व्यतीत-स्तिमिरभरमथो चक्रधाम्ना निरुन्धन् ।
चक्रांशुक्लिष्टदृष्टिं स्थितमथ विजयं पश्य पश्येति वारां
पारे त्वं प्राददर्शः किमपि हि तमसां दूरदूरं पदं ते ॥ 7 ॥

7. Riding westward in a very fast chariot with Arjuna and crossing the mountain barrier of Lokaloka, beyond which lies the region of eternal and absolute darkness, Thou didst illumine that region with the splendour of Thy divine discus Sudarsana. To Arjuna, whose eyes could not bear that splendour, Thou didst show Thy Abode beyond the Causal Waters unaffected by the darkness of ignorance and defying all powers of description.

तत्रासीनं भुजङ्गाधिपशयनतले दिव्यभूषायुधाद्यै-
रावीतं पीतचेलं प्रतिनवजलदश्यामलं श्रीमदङ्गम् ।
मूर्तीनामीशितारं परमिह तिसृणामेकमर्थं श्रुतीनां
त्वामेव त्वं परात्मन् प्रियसखसहितो नेमिथ क्षेमरूपम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. To Him who was seated on the bed constituted of the serpent-king Adisesha; who was decked with divine ornaments, weapons, and a bright garment of yellow silk; whose form, adorned by the presence of Lakshmi, possessed the dark splendour of a fresh rain cloud; who is supreme over the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva; who is the ultimate meaning of all the scriptures—to that Being, embodiment of Moksha and identical with Thyself, didst Thou, with Arjuna, now make prostrations.

युवां मामेव द्वावधिकविवृता-न्तर्हिततया
विभिन्नौ सन्द्रष्टुं स्वयमहमहार्षं द्विजसुतान्
नयेतं द्रागेतानिति खलु वितीर्णान् पुनरमून्
द्विजायादायादाः प्रणुतमहिमा पाण्डुजनुषा ॥ 9 ॥

9. 'In order to see you both, who are but Myself in two forms that are different only in that the Divinity in the one is patent while in the other it is latent, I took away these children of the Brahmana. Now you can take them back forthwith.' With such words the Lord of Vaikuntha handed over the children, and Thou, taking them with Thee, presented them to the Brahmana, while Arjuna extolled Thy greatness.

एवं नानाविहारै-र्जगदभिरमयन् वृष्णिवंशं प्रपुष्ण-
न्नीजानो यज्ञभेदैरतुलविहृतिभिः प्रीणयन्नेणनेत्राः ।
भूभारक्षेपदम्भात् पदकमलजुषां मोक्षणायावतीर्णः
पूर्णं ब्रह्मैव साक्षाद्यदुषु मनुजतारूषितस्त्वं व्यलासीः ॥ 10 ॥

10. Delighting the world by numerous sportive activities as described above, organising the clan of Vishnis into a mighty power, performing many sacrificial rites, pleasing the womenfolk with unparalleled sportive endearments, and giving liberation to dependants and devotees in the guise of ridding the earth of its burden, Thou, the Infinite Brahman, didst shine through the veil of a human form amidst the Vrishnis.

प्रायेण द्वारवत्यामवृतदयि तदा नारदस्त्वद्रसार्द्र-
स्तस्माल्लेभे कदाचित्खलु सुकृतनिधि-स्त्वत्पिता तत्त्वबोधम् ।
भक्तानामग्रयायी स च खलु मतिमानुद्धवस्त्वत्त एव
प्राप्तो विज्ञानसारं स किल जनहितायाधुनाऽस्ते बदर्याम् ॥ 11 ॥

11. From Narada who was in those days mostly staying at Dwaraka engrossed in the bliss of Thy service, Thy meritorious father gained spiritual insight and illumination, while Uddhava, the foremost among the devotees and the most distinguished among the intelligent, attained to enlightenment from instruction given by Thee directly. It is said that

Uddhava is even now staying at Badarikashrama for the good of the world.

सोऽयं कृष्णावतारो जयति तव विभो यत्र सौहार्दभीति-

स्नेहद्वेषानुराग-प्रभृतिभिरतुलै-रश्रमैर्योगभेदैः ।

आर्तिं तीर्त्वा समस्ता-ममृतपदमगुः सर्वतः सर्वलोकाः

स त्वं विश्वार्तिशान्त्यै पवनपुरपते भक्तिपूर्त्यै च भूयाः ।। 12 ।।

12. Thus shines Thy exalted Incarnation as Krishna in all its uniqueness—wherein various types of men in large numbers were freed from their worldly ills and led to the attainment of liberation through varied easy but unique methods of spiritual communion based on friendship, fear, love, hatred, sexual attraction and such other natural expressions of the human mind. May Thou, Lord Krishna, the resident of the temple of Guruvayoor, be gracious enough to vouchsafe me the complete eradication of my sufferings and the attainment of perfect devotion. [27]

CANTO 89

UNIQUENESS OF VISHNU CONCEPTION

रमाजाने जाने यदिह तव भक्तेषु विभवो

न सद्यः सम्पद्य-स्तदिह मदकृत्वा-दशमिनाम् ।

प्रशान्तिं कृत्वैव प्रदिशसि ततः काममखिलं

प्रशान्तेषु क्षिप्रं न खलु भवदीये च्युतिकथा ।। 1 ।।

1. O Lord of Rema (the goddess of prosperity)! In this world Thy devotees are not blessed with prosperity easily. Methinks it is because prosperity begets pride (which is antagonistic to the growth of devotion). In the case of the proud and the haughty, only after they are established in a peaceful and dispassionate state of mind dost Thou bestow on them all desirable objects, whereas in respect of those who are already peaceful and disppasionate, such blessings are granted immediately. There is no downfall for a devotee of Thine.

सद्यः प्रसादरुषितान् विधिशङ्करादीन्
केचिद्विभो निजगुणानुगुणं भजन्तः ।
भ्रष्टा भवन्ति बत कष्टमदीर्घदृष्टया
स्पष्टं वृकासुर उदाहरणं किलास्मिन् ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Lord! There are people who, following the promptings of their own nature, worship Brahma and Siva who are as quick to be provoked as they are to be propitiated. Alas! they pay for this shortsightedness with downfall. The case of Vrikasura is a clear instance in point.

शकुनिजःस तु नारदमेकदा त्वरिततोष-मपृच्छ-दधीश्वरम् ।
स च दिदेश गिरीशमुपासितुं न तु भवन्तमबन्धु-मसाधुषु ॥

3. Vrikasura, the son of Sakuni, once asked Narada which Deity was the easiest to propitiate. The sage instructed him in the worship of Siva and not of Thee, who dost never support evil ones.

तपस्तप्त्वा घोरं स खलु कुपितः सप्तमदिने
शिरः छित्वा सद्यः पुरहरमुपस्थाप्य पुरतः ।
अतिक्षुद्रं रौद्रं शिरसि करदानेन निधनं
जगन्नाथाद्वव्रे भवति विमुखानां क्व शुभधीः ॥ 4 ॥

4. Practising severe austerities for seven days (and yet failing to see Siva), the Asura, in great anger, was about to cut off his own head (and sacrifice it in the fire), when Siva presented himself before him. From that great Lord of the universe, he sought a mean and horrible boon that any person on whose head he placed his hand, should die immediately. How can one expect any good sense in people who are averse to Thy worship?

मोक्तारं बन्धमुक्तो हरिणपतिरिव प्राद्रवत्सोऽथ रुद्रं
दैत्यात् भीत्या स्म देवो दिशि दिशि वलते पृष्टतो दत्तदृष्टिः ।
तूष्णीके सर्वलोके तव पदमधिरोक्ष्यन्त-मुद्वीक्ष्य शर्वं
दूरादेवाग्रतस्त्वं पटुवटुवपुषा तस्थिषे दानवाय ॥ 5 ॥

5. Just as a lion, when released from his cage, would first rush at the person who releases him, the Asura (wanting to test his newly acquired power on Siva himself), chased him. Fleeing from the Asura, Siva raced through all the worlds, with a constant backward look at the pursuing Asura. As all the worlds watched this in helpless silence, Thou, noticing from a great distance, that Siva was making for Thy abode, didst confront the Asura in the guise of a smart Brahmacharin (and address him thus):

भद्रं ते शाकुनेय भ्रमसि किमधुना त्वं पिशाचस्य वाचा
सन्देहश्चेन्मदुक्तौ तव किमु न करोष्यङ्गुलीमङ्ग मौलौ ।
इत्थं त्वद्वाक्यमूढः शिरसि कृतकरः सोऽपतच्छिन्नपातं
भ्रंशो ह्येवं परोपासितुरपि च गतिः शूलिनोऽपि त्वमेव ॥ 6 ॥

6. 'Hail unto you, O son of Sakuni! Why trouble yourself by running about in vain, putting faith in the (absurd) words of this ghost of a fellow (Pisacha)? If you doubt my word, why not test it by placing your hands on your own head?' Befooled by these words of Thine, he put his hands on his own head, and fell down dead like an uprooted tree. Such downfall is the fate of people who adore other deities. What is more, Thou art the ultimate refuge of even Siva.

भृगुं किल सरस्वती-निकटवासिन-स्तापसा-
स्त्रिमूर्तिषु समादिश-न्नधिकसत्त्वतां वेदितुम् ।
अयं पुनरनादरा-दुदितरुद्धरोषे विधौ
हरेऽपि च जिहिंसिषौ गिरिजया धृते त्वामगात् ॥ 7 ॥

7. The ascetics residing on the banks of the Saraswati once sent the sage Bhrigu (one of Brahma's sons) to test who among the Trimurtis (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva) was the most holy and spiritual. When the sage showed no proper respect to Brahma, the latter grew very angry with him at first but controlled himself on second thought. Next Bhrigu behaved similarly towards Siva, who (being mightily angry) would have killed that sage but for Parvati's intercession. Finally the sage reached Thee.

सुप्तं रमाङ्कभुवि पङ्कजलोचनं त्वां
विप्रे विनिघ्नति पदेन मुदोत्थितस्त्वम् ।
सर्वं क्षमस्व मुनिवर्य भवेत् सदा मे
त्वत्पादचिह्नमिह भूषणमित्यवादीः ।। 8 ।।

8. When Bhrigu kicked Thee, the lotus-eyed, on Thy chest whilst Thou wert asleep resting Thy head on Rema's lap, Thou didst rise up in good humour, apologise to him (for negligence in properly receiving a holy personage like him), and declare that the mark of the sage's kick would ever remain a decoration on Thy chest.

निश्चित्य ते च सुदृढं त्वयि बद्धभावाः
सारस्वता मुनिवरा दधिरे विमोक्षम् ।
त्वामेवमच्युत पुनश्च्युतिदोषहीनं
सत्त्वोच्चयैकतनुमेव वयं भजामः ।। 9 ।।

9. Those Rishis staying on the banks of Saraswati understood from the experience of sage Bhrigu that Thou art the greatest Divinity, and by practising firm devotion to Thee, they attained liberation. O Lord! Thou Eternal one! I too am worshipping the undecaying form of Pure Spirit that Thou art.

जगत्सृष्टयादौ त्वां निगमनिवहै-र्वन्दिभिरिव
स्तुतं विष्णो सच्चित्परमरस-निर्द्वैतवपुषम् ।
परात्मानं भूमन् पशुपवनिताभाग्यनिवहं
परीतापश्रान्त्यै पवनपुरवासिन् परिभजे ।। 10 ।।

10. O All-pervading One! O Infinite Being! O Resident of this Temple of Guruvayoor! In the beginning of creation, just as minstrels awaken kings with songs of praise, the Vedas (embodied as Devatas) sang hymns in praise of Thee, describing Thee as one with the supreme non-dual Bliss-Consciousness. Thou who wert thus praised and who art the embodiment of the spiritual merits of the Gopikas of Vrindavana—I adore Thee for the eradication of all my spiritual and physical afflictions.

CANTO 90

ALL SCRIPTURES POINT TO THEE

वृकभृगुमुनिमोहि-न्यम्बरीषादिवृत्ते-
ष्वयि तव हि महत्वं सर्वशर्वादिजैत्रम् ॥
स्थितमिह परमात्मन् निष्कलार्वागभिन्नं
किमपि यदवभातं तद्धि रूपं तवैव ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Supreme Being! In the episodes related here of Vrikasura, sage Bhrigu, Mohini incarnation, king Ambarisha and others, Thy superiority over all other Deities like Siva stands established. Thou art that inscrutable and indescribable Being who art simultaneously and without divisiveness, both the partless whole and the discrete manifestations as Deities and other objects.[28]

मूर्तित्रयेश्वर-सदाशिवपञ्चकं यत् प्राहुः परात्मवपुरेव सदाशिवोऽस्मिन् ।
तत्रेश्वरस्तु स विकुण्ठपदस्त्वमेव त्रित्वं पुनर्भजसि सत्यपदे त्रिभागे ॥

2. Schools of Saiva theologians speak of the Deity as having five aspects—Trimurti (or the triune manifestation as Brahma, Vishnu and Siva) together with Iswara and Sadasiva. Of these, the fifth principle Sadasiva is Thyself, the Supreme Self (Paramatman), while Iswara is Thy manifestaion in Vaikuntha-Pada. Again in the Satyaloka with its three spheres, Thou manifestest as the Trimurti of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva.

तत्रापि सात्त्विकतनुं तव विष्णुमाहु-
र्धाता तु सत्त्वविरलो रजसैव पूर्णः ।
सत्त्वोत्कटत्वमपि चास्ति तमोविकार-
चेष्टादिकश्च तव शङ्करनाम्नि मूर्तौ ॥ 3 ॥

3. Among the Trimurti, Thy manifestation in pure Sattva is known as Vishnu, and in abundance of Rajas with a trace of Sattva, as Brahma. That manifestation in which

there is an exuberance of Sattva combined with a little crude expression of Tamas is called Sankara (Siva).

तं च त्रिमूर्त्यतिगतं परपूरुषं त्वां शर्वात्मनापि खलु सर्वमयत्वहेतोः ।
शंसन्त्युपासनविधौ तदपि स्वतस्तु त्वद्रूपमित्यतिदृढं बहु नः प्रमाणम् ।।

4. In the codes of worship the one who is praised as Sarva (Siva) is only Thyself, as all gods and goddesses are but different manifestations of Thyself, the Supreme Spirit transcending the Trimurti. We have many strong proofs to show that Siva is in reality only an aspect of Thee.

श्रीशङ्करोऽपि भगवान् सकलेषु ताव-
त्वामेव मानयति यो न हि पक्षपाती ।
त्वन्निष्ठमेव स हि नामसहस्रकादि
व्याख्यात् भवत्स्तुतिपरश्च गतिं गतोऽन्ते ।। 5 ।।

5. The great Sankaracharya, who is termed Bhagavan to indicate his Divinity, has done special honour to Thee among all Deities, though in his philosophy he has no leaning to any particular deity. He has interpreted Sahasranama and other works as devoted to Thee, and in the end he passed away uttering Thy praise.

मूर्तित्रयातिगमुवाच च मन्त्रशास्त्र-
स्यादौ कलायसुषमं सकलेश्वरं त्वाम् ।
ध्यानं च निष्कलमसौ प्रणवे खलूक्त्वा
त्वामेव तत्र सकलं निजगाद नान्यम् ।। 6 ।।

6. At the beginning of his work Prapanchasara, dealing with Mantra-sastra (or the science of Mantras), Acharya Sankara has described Thee as endowed with a complexion resembling the colour of Kalaya flower and as superior even to the Trimurti. And in dealing with the Pranava (Om), after expounding meditation on it as the Nishkala (Partless Infinite Being), he has described Thy Form and none else as the object to be meditated upon in the Sakala (relative) conception of it (the Pranava).

समस्तसारे च पुराणसङ्ग्रहे विसंशयं त्वन्महिमैव वर्ण्यते ।
त्रिमूर्तियुक्सत्यपद-त्रिभागतः परं पदं ते कथितं न शूलिनः ।। 7 ।।

7. In the text called Purana Samgraha (which gives the gist of all Puranas), Thy supreme greatness has been described unequivocally. After depicting Satyaloka as having three parts, one for each of the Trimurtis, Thy Abode of Vaikuntha has been described as distinct from, and superior to, it (Satyaloka). No such reference is made to the Abode of Siva.

यद् ब्राह्मकल्प इह भागवतद्वितीय-स्कन्धोदितं वपुरनावृतमीश धात्रे ।
तस्यैव नाम हरिशर्वमुखं जगाद श्रीमाधवः शिवपरोऽपि पुराणसारे ।।

8. O Lord! The form that Thou didst reveal to Brahma at the beginning of the period of time known as Brahmakalpa, and which is described in the second Skandha of the Bhagavata, has been referred to by names such as Siva and Vishnu indiscriminately in Puranasara by Madhavacharya, who was himself a votary of Siva.

ये स्वप्रकृत्यनुगुणं गिरिशं भजन्ते
तेषां फलं हि दृढयैव तदीयभक्त्या ।
व्यासो हि तेन कृतवानधिकारिहेतोः
स्कान्दादिकेषु तव हानिवचोऽर्थवादैः ।। 9 ।।

9. Those who adore Siva in accordance with their natural disposition, could attain Moksha (liberation) only through the development of firm faith in, and devotion for, Siva. It is to meet the requirement of aspirants of this type—that is, to have their faith strengthened by scriptural sanction—that Vyasa has made statements belittling Thee in Puranas like the Skanda. Such statements are only to be taken as Arthavada (eulogy).

भूतार्थकीर्ति-रनुवाद-विरुद्धवादौ
त्रेधार्थवादगतयः खलु रोचनार्थाः ।
स्कान्दादिकेषु बहवोऽत्र विरुद्धवादा-
स्त्वत्तामसत्व-परिभूत्यु-पशिक्षणार्थाः ।। 10 ।।

10. Arthavada is of three types—first, exaggeration of existing facts and qualities; next, praising non-existent but possible qualities; and lastly, making statements of a non-existent and impossible nature contradictory to all valid criteria. They are meant to create an interest in the theme dealt with. The many statements in the Puranas like the Skanda attributing dullness and defeat to Thee are only Arthavadas of the third type.

यत् किञ्चिदप्यविदुषाऽपि विभो मयोक्तं
तन्मन्त्रशास्त्रवचना-द्यभिदृष्टमेव ।
व्यासोक्तिसारमय-भागवतोपगीत
क्लेशान् विधूय कुरु भक्तिभरं परात्मन् ॥ 11 ॥

11. O All-pervading Being! Though I am a man of little learning, what I have said has the sanction of Mantra-sastra. O Thou who hast been praised as the Supreme Being in Srimad Bhagavata, the greatest of Vyasa's compositions! May Thou be pleased to eradicate my ailment and endow me with supreme devotion!

CANTO 91

BHAGAVATA-DHARMA

श्रीकृष्ण त्वत्पदोपासन-मभयतमं बद्धमिथ्यार्थदृष्टे-
र्मर्त्यस्यार्तस्य मन्ये व्यपसरति भयं येन सर्वात्मनैव ।
यत्तावत् त्वत्प्रणीतानिह भजनविधी-नास्थितो मोहमार्गे
धावन्नप्यावृताक्षः स्खलति न कुहचि-द्देवदेवाखिलात्मन् ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Lord Krishna! For man who has become the victim of endless miseries because of the wrong acceptance of ephemeral values as true and enduring, Thy service, I consider, is the best haven of refuge. For thereby, involvement in Samsara (repeated births and deaths) is overcome completely and for ever. O Lord of Lords! O Soul of all Beings!

A person who steadily follows the path of devotion promulgated by Thee, can close his eyes and run along the world's delusive paths without any fear of slipping.[29]

भूमन् कायेन वाचा मुहुरपि मनसा त्वद्बलप्रेरितात्मा
यद्यत् कुर्वे समस्तं तदिह परतरे त्वय्यसावर्पयामि ।
जात्यापीह श्वपाकस्त्वयि निहितमनःकर्मवागिन्द्रियार्थ-
प्राणो विश्वं पुनीते न तु विमुखमना-स्त्वत्पदाद्विप्रवर्यः ॥ 2 ॥

2. O All-pervading Being! Whatever I do with body, speech and mind prompted by Thy power (expressing as tendencies from within), all that I offer at the feet of Thee, the Supreme Spirit. Even if a person be of low birth, if he has resigned his mind, power of action, speech, senses and vital energies at Thy feet, he sanctifies the worlds. But vain, indeed, is the pride of a Brahmana in his high birth if his mind is turned away from Thee.

भीतिर्नाम द्वितीयाद्-भवति ननु मनःकल्पितञ्च द्वितीयं
तेनैक्याभ्यासशीलो हृदयमिह यथाशक्ति बुद्ध्या निरुन्ध्याम् ।
मायाविद्धेतु तस्मिन् पुनरपि न तथा भाति मायाधिनाथं
तत्त्वां भक्त्या महत्या सततमनुभज-न्नीश भीतिं विजह्याम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Fear arises from the consciousness of a second different from oneself. This consciousness of a second is an imaginary super-imposition of the mind. Therefore I am trying my best through discrimination to discipline the mind in the consciousness of oneness. But when this power of discrimination is overpowered by Thy Maya, no amount of effort is of any avail in getting established in Unitary Consciousness. Therefore, O Lord, I am trying to overcome the fear of Samsara by constant and devoted worship of Thee, the Master of Maya.

भक्तेरुत्पत्तिवृद्धी तव चरणजुषां सङ्गमेनैव पुंसा-
मासाद्ये पुण्यभाजां श्रिय इव जगति श्रीमतां सङ्गमेन ।
तत्सङ्गो देव भूयान्मम खलु सततं तन्मुखादुन्मिषद्भि-
स्त्वन्माहात्म्यप्रकारै-र्भवति च सुदृढा भक्तिरुद्धूतपापा ॥ 4 ॥

4. It is by association with Thy devotees that Bhakti germinates and develops in men who have auspicious deeds to their credit, just as in this world it is the relationship with prosperous men in various ways that leads to the prosperity of people. Therefore, O Lord, may I have always contact with holy men, and through hearing from them narratives and hymns dealing with Thy excellences, may I, with all my sins effaced, become established in firm and wholehearted devotion.

श्रेयोमार्गेषु भक्त्या-वधिकबहुमति-र्जन्मकर्माणि भूयो
गायन् क्षेमाणि नामान्यपि तदुभयतः प्रद्रुतं प्रद्रुतात्मा ।
उद्यद्धासः कदाचित् कुहचिदपि रुदन् क्वापि गर्जन् प्रगाय-
न्नुन्मादीव प्रनृत्यन्नयि कुरु करुणां लोकबाह्यश्चरेयम् ।। 5 ।।

5. Preferring the path of devotion from among the disciplines for the attainment of Moksha, I shall fervently chant again and again Thy names and accounts of Thy achievements in Thy Incarnations, so sanctifying and spiritually elevating, until with my mind melting with loving emotion, I shall sometimes laugh, sometimes cry, sometimes shout, sometimes sing aloud and sometimes dance in ecstasy, and move about like one who has lost one's link with society and its conventions. O Lord! Deign to bestow this state of mind on me!

भूतान्येतानि भूतात्मकमपि सकलं पक्षिमत्स्यान् मृगादीन्
मर्त्यान् मित्राणि शत्रूनपि यमितमति-स्त्वन्मयान्यानमानि ।
त्वत्सेवायां हि सिध्येन्मम तव कृपया भक्तिदार्ढ्यं विराग-
स्त्वत्तत्त्वस्यावबोधोऽपि च भुवनपते यत्नभेदं विनैव ।। 6 ।।

6. Having disciplined my mind to see Thy presence in everything, I shall salute all beings—the five elements and all the products of their combinations as also these living beings like birds, fish, animals and men, including friends and even enemies. Thus following the path of devotion, I shall, through Thy Grace, attain to deep-rooted God-love, dispassion and knowledge of Thy truth-nature simultaneously (just as by swallowing a morsel of food one gets satisfaction of hunger, enjoyment of taste and bodily strength all at once).

नो मुह्यन् क्षुत्तृडाद्यै-र्भवसरणिभवै-स्त्वन्निलीनाशयत्वा-
च्चिन्तासातत्यशाली निमिषलवमपि त्वत्पदादप्रकम्पः ।
इष्टानिष्टेषु तुष्टिव्यसनविरहितो मायिकत्वावबोधा-
ज्ज्योत्स्नाभि-स्त्वन्नखेन्दो-रधिकशिशिरिते-नात्मना सञ्चरेयम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Overcoming the sufferings of worldly life like hunger and thirst through the mergence of the mind in Thee, never deviating from Thy feet even for a second through constant meditation on Thee, and eschewing both joy and sorrow in prosperity and adversity through the perception of the unreality of both—may I be fit to wander about with a mind cooled by the light of the moon of Thy toe-nails!

भूतेष्वेषु त्वदैक्यस्मृति-समधिगतौ नाधिकारोऽधुना चे-
त्त्वत्प्रेम त्वत्कमैत्री जडमतिषु कृपा द्विट्सु भूयादुपेक्षा ।
अर्चायां वा समर्चाकुतुकमुरुतर-श्रद्धया वर्धतां मे
त्वत्संसेवी तथापि द्रुतमुपलभते भक्तलोकोत्तमत्वम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. If I be unfit now to have the experience of Thee as one with all beings (without any difference of good and bad, friend and foe), let me be endowed with loving devotion to Thee which will find expression as the feeling of friendliness towards Thy devotees, kindliness towards persons in ignorance, and indifference towards enemies. Or in the alternative, let me at least be endowed with great faith and absorption in the adoration of holy images, which form of service to Thee can also raise one without much delay to the highest pinnacle of divine love.

आवृत्य त्वत्स्वरूपं क्षितिजलमरुदा-द्यात्मना विक्षिपन्ती
जीवान् भूयिष्ठकर्मावलि-विवशगतीन् दुःखजाले क्षिपन्ती ।
त्वन्माया माभिभून्मामयि भुवनपते कल्पते तत्प्रशान्त्यै
त्वत्पादे भक्तिरेवेत्यवददयि विभो सिद्धयोगी प्रबुद्धः ॥ 9 ॥

9. Projecting this world of Becoming with all its material combinations like earth, water, air etc., on the substratum of Thy Being, after having first hidden it (by the film of ignorance), Thy Maya subjects the Jivas to the enjoyments

and sufferings of this world of Becoming according to their previously acquired merits and demerits. O Lord of all! O All-pervading Being! Let not this Maya of Thine overpower me! Only devotion to Thee can neutralise this Maya and its effects—so said the great yogi Prabuddha.

दुःखान्यालोक्य जन्तुष्वल-मुदितविवेकोऽह-माचार्यवर्या-
ल्लब्ध्वा त्वद्रूपतत्त्वं गुणचरितकथा-द्य् उद्भवद्भक्तिभूमा ।
मायामेनां तरित्वा परमसुखमये त्वत्पदे मोदिताहे
तस्यायं पूर्वरङ्गः पवनपुरपते नाशयाशेषरोगान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Having obtained discriminative insight by observing the miseries of creatures, may I be enabled to approach a spiritual teacher and be instructed by him in Thy true nature! So instructed, may I cross this Maya with the help of intense devotion generated by listening to accounts of Thy excellences and sportive activities, and thereby begin to delight in that Bliss, of which Thy State is constituted. O Lord of Guruvayoor! As a preparation for this, may Thou be propitious enough to eradicate all my ailments!

CANTO 92

ROLE OF BHAKTI IN KALIYUGA

वेदैः सर्वाणि कर्माण्यफलपरतया वर्णितानीति बुद्ध्वा
तानि त्वय्यर्पितान्येव हि समनुचरन् यानि नैष्कर्म्यमीश ।
मा भूद्वेदैर्निषिद्धे कुहचिदपि मनःकर्मवाचां प्रवृत्ति-
र्दुर्वर्जं चेदवाप्तं तदपि खलु भवत्यर्पये चित्प्रकाशे ॥ 1 ॥

1. Recognising that the ritualistic Karmas are described in the Vedas not with a view to lay stress on the coveted results associated with them, (but only as a means to induce man to get disciplined through them and thus be put on the path to perfection), may I perform them as an offering unto Thee and thereby free myself from the bondage of action! Let me not.

even by mistake, have anything to do by thought, word or deed with actions that are contrary to the teachings of the Vedas! If any such prohibited action becomes unavoidable, I shall offer even that unto Thee, the glowing Light of Consciousness (in whom it will be sublimed).[30]

यस्त्वन्यः कर्मयोगस्तव भजनमयस्तत्र चाभीष्टमूर्ति
हृद्यां सत्त्वैकरूपां दृषदि हृदि मृदि क्वापि वा भावयित्वा ।
पुष्पैर्गन्धैर्निवेद्यैरपि च विरचितैः शक्तितो भक्तिपूतै-
र्नित्यं वर्यां सपर्यां विदधदयि विभो त्वत्प्रसादं भजेयम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. O Lord! There are forms of ritualistic worship inculcated by the Agamas, that are distinguished from the ritualistic sacrifices of the Vedas and are entirely devoted to Thy adoration. Following the former system of worship, I shall establish, through contemplative assertion, the presence of the Deity as a pure Sattvika manifestation of great appeal in the heart, in a stone image, in a clay image, or in any other symbol, and offer therein devoted worship to Thee every day according to my capacity with various ingredients like flowers, incense and food offerings, and seek Thy grace, through that means.[31]

स्त्रीशूद्रास्त्वत्कथादि-श्रवणविरहिता आसतां ते दयार्हा-
स्त्वत्पादासन्नयातान् द्विजकुलजनुषो हन्त शोचाम्यशान्तान् ।
वृत्यर्थं ते यजन्तो बहुकथितमपि त्वामनाकर्णयन्तो
दृप्ता विद्याभिजात्यैः किमु न विदधते तादृशं मा कृथा माम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Women and men of the lower social order, who seldom get an opportunity to listen to the chanting of Thy name and accounts of Thy excellences are indeed to be pitied. But what of those others who, despite their being born in higher social divisions and having all facilities for worshipping Thee, would not do so because of their egotism and addiction to the life of the senses? I can only bemoan their lot. They perform sacrifices for mere show or for material ends. Though instructed abundantly about Thee by the scriptures and teachers, they turn a deaf ear to all such teachings. Proud of their learning and aristocratic birth, there is no misdeed that they do not commit. O Lord, safeguard me, Thy devotee, from becoming one like them!

पापोऽयं कृष्णरामे-त्यभिलपति निजं गूहितुं दुश्चरित्रं
निर्लज्जस्यास्य वाचा बहुतरकथनीयानि मे विघ्नितानि ।
भ्राता मे वन्ध्यशीलो भजति किल सदा विष्णुमित्थं बुधांस्ते
निन्दन्त्युच्चैर्हसन्ति त्वयि निहितरतींस्तादृशं मा कृथा माम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. 'This vicious fellow is uttering divine Names like Rama and Krishna to hide his rascality.' 'By the prattles of this shameless man, I have been prevented from discussing various important matters.' 'My brother, a good-for-nothing fellow, wastes all his time worshipping Vishnu.' In such terms these worldlings insult men of spiritual inclination. They laugh loudly at Thy devotees. May I not, O Lord, degenerate to their level!

श्वेतच्छायं कृते त्वां मुनिवरवपुषं प्रीणयन्ते तपोभि-
स्त्रेतायां स्रुक्स्रुवाद्याङ्कितमरुणतनुं यज्ञरूपं यजन्ते ।
सेवन्ते तन्त्रमार्गै-विलसदरिगदं द्वापरे श्यामलाङ्गं
नीलं सङ्कीर्तनाद्यै रिह कलिसमये मानुषास्त्वां भजन्ते ॥ 5 ॥

5. In the Krita age men propitiate Thee by meditating on Thee in the form of a contemplative ascetic of white complexion (bearing emblems like matted locks, bark cloth, dear skin, beads, water pot etc.) In the Treta age they offer sacrificial ingredients to Thee manifested as the Lord of Sacrifice (Yajna), red in colour and bearing emblems of sacrificial rites like Sruk and Sruva. In the Dwapara age they adore Thee as endowed with a light blue complexion and bearing weapons like the sword and the discus, according to the rites laid down in the Tantras. And in the age of Kali, men worship Thee in a form of black complexion, through the chanting of Thy divine Names and the recital of Thy excellences.[32]

सोऽयं कालेयकालो जयति मुररिपो यत्र सङ्कीर्तनाद्यै-
र्निर्यत्नैरेव मार्गै-रखिलद न चिरात् त्वत्प्रसादं भजन्ते ।
जातास्त्रेताकृतादावपि हि किल कलौ सम्भवं कामयन्ते
दैवात्तत्रैव जातान् विषयविषरसैर्मा विभो वञ्चयास्मान् ॥ 6 ॥

6. Hail, then, to the age of Kali, now extant, in which through easy and effortless means like Sankirtana (collective singing of the divine Name and attributes) men can attain to Thy grace, O Bestower of all boons on devotees! It is well-known that for this reason even those born in the ages of Krita and Treta desire to be born in the age of Kali. Therefore, O Lord, born as I am in this age owing to my good fortune, pray, deflect me not from Thy path through the deceptive sweetness of poisonous sense enjoyments.

भक्तास्तावत्कलौ स्युर्द्रमिलभुवि ततो भूरिशस्तत्र चोच्चैः
कावेरीं ताम्रपर्णीमनु किल कृतमालाश्च पुण्यां प्रतीचीम् ।
हा मामप्येतदन्तर्भवमपि च विभो किञ्चिदञ्चद्रसं त्व-
य्याशापाशैर्निबध्य भ्रमय न भगवन् पूरय त्वन्निषेवाम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. It is said that in the age of Kali devotees will abound in the Dravida country, especially in the regions through which flow the rivers Kaveri, Tamraparni, Vaiga and the holy west-flowing stream (Bharata River). I have been fortunate enough, O Lord, to be born in this region (of the last mentioned river) and also to be endowed with a modicum of devotion for Thee. Deign, O Lord, to free me from the infatuation caused by the bondage of desires and fulfil my aspiration to devote myself totally to Thy service![33]

दृष्ट्वा धर्मद्रुहं तं कलिमपकरुणं प्राङ्महीक्षित् परीक्षि-
द्धन्तुं व्याकृष्टखड्गोऽपि न विनिहतवान् सारवेदी गुणांशात् ।
त्वत्सेवाद्याशु सिध्ये-दसदिह न तथा त्वत्परे चैष भीरु-
र्यत्तु प्रागेव रोगादिभि-रपहरते तत्र हा शिक्षयैनम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Possessed of true insight, king Parikshit, though he at first raised his sword to strike at the cruel spirit of Kali, the harasser of all virtue, refrained from killing him on remembering the good features about him and the age he presides over. In the age of Kali, Thy service fructifies quickly, yielding its results even in this life, but not so, sins; (for only on actual commission, and not, as in other ages, on intention to commit, are sins operative in Kali. Besides, there are easy expiations to purify the sinner like the utterance of the Divine Name).

Again, Kali shrinks from those devoted to Thee. And so, alas! in order to keep men under his sway, he distracts their mind with disease and other disabilities even before their devotion has taken root. For this let him be punished.

गङ्गा गीता च गायत्र्यपि च तुलसिका गोपिकाचन्दनं तत्
सालग्रामाभिपूजा परपुरुष तथैकादशी नामवर्णाः ।
एतान्यष्टाप्ययत्नान्ययि कलिसमये त्वत्प्रसादप्रसिद्धया
क्षिप्रं मुक्तिप्रदानी-त्यभिदधुरृषय-स्तेषु मां सज्जयेथाः ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Supreme Lord! In this age of Kali, Ganga, Gita, Gayatri, Tulasi leaves, sandal paste, Salagram, Ekadasi fast, and Divine Names—these eight items, sages say, are the easy and quick means of salvation as they secure Thy abounding grace. May I be intensely devoted to them all!

देवर्षीणां पितृणामपि च न पुनरृणी किङ्करो वा स भूमन्
योऽसौ सर्वात्मना त्वां शरणमुपगतः सर्वकृत्यानि हित्वा ।
तस्योत्पन्नं विकर्मा-प्यखिल-मपनुदस्येव चित्तस्थितस्त्वं
तन्मे पापोत्थतापान् पवनपुरपते रुन्धि भक्तिं प्रणीयाः ॥ 10 ॥

10. O All-pervading Being! Persons who abandon all actions (i.e. pursuit of self-centred values) and take shelter in Thee wholeheartedly, are no longer debtors or servants of Devas, Pitris, fellow-beings and brute creations, as men in general are. Any adverse Karma that may accrue to them, is destroyed by Thee, residing in their hearts. Therefore, O Lord of Guruvayoor! may Thou be pleased to eradicate the sufferings caused by my sins and generate in me wholehearted devotion to Thee! [34]

CANTO 93

WISDOM FROM LIFE'S EXPERIENCES

बन्धुस्नेहं विजह्यां तव हि करुणया त्वय्युपावेशितात्मा
सर्वं त्यक्त्वा चरेयं सकलमपि जगद्वीक्ष्य मायाविलासम् ।
नानात्वाद्भ्रान्तिजन्या-त्सति खलु गुणदोषावबोधे विधिर्वा
व्यासेधो वा कथं तौ त्वयि निहितमते-र्वीतवैषम्यबुद्धेः ॥ 1 ॥

1. If Thou be gracious, I shall abandon my love and attachment for all my relatives. With my mind merged in Thee, I shall abandon everything and wander about, viewing the whole universe as an expression of Maya, Thy mysterious power. The compulsions of the 'ought' and the 'ought not' (Vidhi-nishedhas) of the scriptures are applicable only in the sphere of multiplicity born of false understanding. How can they govern one whose understanding has been merged in Thee and has transcended the consciousness of differences?

क्षुत्तृष्णालोपमात्रे सततकृतधियो जन्तवः सन्त्यनन्ता-
स्तेभ्यो विज्ञानवत्वात् पुरुष इह वरस्तज्जनिर्दुर्लभैव ।
तत्राप्यात्मात्मनः स्यात् सुहृदपि च रिपुर्यस्त्वयि न्यस्तचेता-
स्तापोच्छित्तेरुपायं स्मरति स हि सुहृत् स्वात्मवैरी ततोऽन्यः ॥ 2 ॥

2. Countless is the number of beings in the universe whose attention is set solely on the satisfaction of physical wants like hunger and thirst. Man is superior in their midst in so far as he is endowed with Vijnana (or higher understanding capable of grasping ethical and spiritual values). Human birth, however, is rare (considering the incredibly vast number of other living creatures of all species inhabiting the world). And among men, a person's own self can become his friend or foe (according to the way he makes use of his Vijnana or higher understanding). An individual who devotes his mind to Thee and concerns himself with the means of overcoming the miseries of Samsara, is his own friend. All others are their own foes.

त्वत्कारुण्ये प्रवृत्ते क इव नहि गुरुर्लोकवृत्तेऽपि भूमन्
सर्वाक्रान्तापि भूमिर्नहि चलति ततः सत्क्षमां शिक्षयेयम् ।
गृह्णीयामीश तत्त-द्विषयपरिचयेऽप्यप्रसक्तिं समीरा-
द्व्याप्तत्वञ्चात्मनो मे गगनगुरुवशाद्भातु निर्लेपता च ॥ 3 ॥

3. O Lord! When Thy grace is operative, there is nothing even in this worldly existence that cannot play the part of a spiritual teacher. Look at the earth. It moves not even if oppressed by all! From the earth let me learn true forbearance. Look at the air. It is tainted not even if it contacts all kinds of objects! From the air let me learn the lesson of non-attachment in the midst of contacts with sense objects. Look at the sky. It is all-pervading and unattached! Let me learn the lesson of the Atman's all-pervasiveness and unaffectedness from my Guru, the sky.

स्वच्छः स्यां पावनोऽहं मधुर उदकव-द्वह्निवन्मा स्म गृह्णां
सर्वान्नीनोऽपि दोषं तरुषु तमिव मां सर्वभूतेष्ववेयाम् ।
पुष्टिर्नष्टिः कलानां शशिन इव तनो-र्नात्मनोऽस्तीति विद्यां
तोयादि-व्यस्तमार्ताण्डवदपि च तनुष्वेकतां त्वत्प्रसादात् ॥ 4 ॥

4. May I become clean, purifying, and sweet like water! May I be untainted by any blemish by taking food indiscriminately (without any consideration of rules of purity) even like fire which is unaffected by any substance put into it! May I also learn from the same element, fire (manifesting in different shapes and sizes in different trees involved in a conflagration), the lesson that the Atman remains the same in all bodies in spite of the varying sizes and natures of the bodies in which it manifests! Like the moon which remains the same while its Kalas (phases) wax and wane, may I know that growth and decay are of the body and not of the Atman! And may I realise, by Thy grace, the unity of all the diverse individualities in the one Universal Atman, just like that of all reflected images of the sun in the one universal solar orb!

स्नेहाद्व्याधास्तपुत्र-प्रणयमृत-कपोतायितो मास्म भूवं
प्राप्तं प्राश्नन् सहेय क्षुधमपि शयुवत्सिन्धुवत्स्यामगाधः ।

मा पप्तं योषिदादौ शिखिनि शलभवत् भृङ्गवत्सारभागी
भूयासं किन्तु तद्व-द्धनचयनवशा-न्माहमीश प्रणेशम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. May I not be attached to worldly objects unlike the pigeon which, owing to its attachment to its offspring, met with death in the hunter's net along with them! Like the python let me eat only what chance brings and put up with hunger when nothing is available! Like the ocean let me be deep, without making a show of my spiritual wealth! May I not fall into the flames of lust and lucre like moths into fire! Like the honey bee, let me have the habit of seeking the essence of things! But, O Lord, let me not be destroyed like it by accumulating wealth!

मा बद्धयासं तरुण्या गज इव वशया नार्जयेयं धनौघं
हर्तान्यस्तं हि माध्वीहर इव मृगवन्मा मुहं ग्राम्यगीतैः ।
नात्यासज्जेय भोज्ये झष इव बडिशे पिङ्गलावन्निराशः
सुप्यां भर्तव्ययोगात् कुरर इव विभो सामिषोऽन्यैर्न हन्यै ॥ 6 ॥

6. Let me not be led into captivity by attractive women as the wild elephant is by a female! Let me not accumulate wealth, as it is sure to be plundered by others, as honey-gatherers do with the honey accumulated by bees! Let me not be attracted by pop music as the deer is by the hunter's flute (which draws it to the snare of death)! Let me not have craving for food lest I should be destroyed like the fish by its attraction for the bait! Like Pingala (the courtesan) let me have sound sleep owing to the abandonment of all desires and expectations! Let me not meet with destruction at the hands of others through having possessions needing protection, like the Kurara bird carrying a lump of flesh (and threatened by other birds seeking to snatch away that flesh)!

वर्तेय त्यक्तमानः सुखमति शिशुव-न्निस्सहायश्चरेयं
कन्याया एकशेषो वलय इव विभो वर्जितान्योन्यघोषः ।
त्वच्चित्तो नावबुद्धयै परमिषुकृदिव क्ष्माभृदायानघोषं
गेहेष्वन्यप्रणीते-ष्वहिरिव निवसा-न्युन्दुरोर्मन्दिरेषु ॥ 7 ॥

7. Like a child, may I live happily abandoning all sense of status and pride! Like the solitary conch bangle left on a maiden's wrist, let me move about alone, O All-pervading One, without anybody's help and without the noise of contacts and conflicts with companions! Like an arrow-maker who hears not the noise and commotion attendant on a king's approach, may my mind, bestowed on Thee, be oblivious of everything else! As a snake makes no hole for itself but lives in holes made by rats, may I have no home of my own but be a non-attached wanderer from one house to another belonging to others!

त्वय्येव त्वत्कृतं त्वं क्षपयसि जगदित्यूर्णनाभात् प्रतीयां
त्वच्चिन्ता त्वत्स्वरूपं कुरुत इति दृढं शिक्षये पेशकारात् ।
विड्भस्मात्मा च देहो भवति गुरुवरो यो विवेकं विरक्तिं
धत्ते सञ्चिन्त्यमानो मम तु बहुरुजापीडितोऽयं विशेषात् ॥ 8 ॥

8. From the spider may I learn how the universe is projected by Thee and withdrawn into Thyself! From the beetle may I learn how devoted meditation can confer Thy form on a devotee! And lo! on careful thought, I find that more than all, this body of mine, constituted though it be of dirt and ashes only, has been the greatest of my teachers, because by the intense sufferings to which it has subjected me through various ailments, I have been endowed with discrimination and renunciation (and as a consequence brought to the spiritual path)!

ही ही मे देहमोहं त्यज पवनपुराधीश यत्प्रेमहेतो-
र्गेहे वित्ते कलत्रादिषु च विवशितास्त्वत्पदं विस्मरन्ति ।
सोऽयं वह्नेः शुनो वा परमिह परतः साम्प्रतश्चाक्षिकर्ण-
त्वग्जिह्वाद्या विकर्षन्त्यवशमत इतः कोऽपि न त्वत्पदाब्जे ॥ 9 ॥

9. Alas! I am, O Lord of Guruvayoor, subject to the false notion that I am the body (and the consequent hankering for bodily pleasures). May Thou deign to rid me of this infatuation, because it is by this that one gets enslaved by attachment to home, wealth, wife etc. and becomes forgetful of Thy holy feet. In the end this body (which one cherishes so much) becomes the food of fire or of animals. Even

now while living, it is dragged hither and thither helplessly by the senses like sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. But, alas, none of these takes one to Thy feet!

दुर्वारो देहमोहो यदि पुनरधुना तर्हि निःशेषरोगान्
हृत्वा भक्तिं द्रढिष्ठां कुरु तव पदपङ्केरुहे पङ्कजाक्ष ।
नूनं नानाभवान्ते समधिगतमिमं मुक्तिदं विप्रदेहं
क्षुद्रे हा हन्त मा मा क्षिप विषयरसे पाहि मां मारुतेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. If the obsession of the body-sense is unavoidable, then, O Lotus-eyed Lord, rid me of all my ailments, and bestow on me firm and unshakable devotion to Thy lotus feet. Immerse not in vulgar sensuality this Brahmana body, obtained as the end-product of a long succession of births and deaths, and capable of taking one to liberation. A tragedy indeed it would be, if this is not done, O Lord of Guruvayoor! May Thou be pleased to save me from all dangers!

CANTO 94

ILLUMINATION THROUGH BHAKTI

शुद्धा निष्कामधर्मैः प्रवरगुरुगिरा तत्स्वरूपं परं ते
शुद्धं देहेन्द्रियादि-व्यपगतमखिल-व्याप्तमावेदयन्ते ।
नानात्व-स्थौल्य-कार्श्यादि तु गुणजवपुःसङ्गतोऽध्यासितं ते
वह्नेर्दारु-प्रभेदेष्विव महदणुता-दीप्तताशान्ततादि ॥ 1 ॥

1. With mind purified by performance of desireless action, one comes to understand from the instruction of a competent teacher that supreme aspect of Thine which is immaculate, bodiless, senseless, taintless, all-pervading and transcendent. As for Thy manifestations as the 'many,' with their attributes of smallness, brightness, etc., they are like the expansiveness, smallness, dimness and brilliance of fire according to the nature of the fuel in which it manifests. These differences in manifestation are born of superimposition

(owing to ignorance) on bodies that are the products of the Gunas of Prakriti.

आचार्याख्या-धरस्थारणि-समनुमिल-च्छिष्यरूपोत्तरार-
ण्यावेधोद्भासितेन स्फुटतर-परिबोधाग्निना दह्यमाने ।
कर्मालीवासना-तत्कृततनु-भुवनभ्रान्ति-कान्तारपूरे
दाह्याभावेन विद्याशिखिनि च विरते त्वन्मयी खल्ववस्था ॥ 2 ॥

2. The Fire of Knowledge is churned by the efficient striking of the two fire-sticks, the upper one represented by the disciple and the lower one by the teacher. The Fire of Knowledge thus produced burns up the forest of Ignorance consisting of one's false identification with the body and the world caused by the effects of past actions and the tendencies born of them. When that forest has been completely burnt up, even that fire, for want of any more fuel, subsides in Thee, the Supreme Brahman. That state when even the final unitary mental modification of illumination has sunk in Thee, is called the intuition of oneness with Thee.[85]

एवं त्वत्प्राप्तितोऽन्यो नहि खलु निखिल-क्लेशहानेरुपायो
नैकान्ता-त्यन्तिकास्ते कृषिवदगद-षाड्गुण्य-षड्कर्मयोगाः ।
दुर्वैकल्यैरकल्या अपि निगमपथा-स्तत्फलान्यप्यवाप्ता
मत्तास्त्वां विस्मरन्तः प्रसजति पतने यान्त्यनन्तान् विषादान् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Except this attainment of Thee, all other means like medicine, occult practices, Vedic pursuits, Yoga etc. that men resort to as a means for overcoming their sufferings, are ultimately ineffective, like cultivation, in eradicating their woes or in warding off their recurrence. The paths of Vedic rituals have various blemishes inherent in them and cannot therefore be a means for the final eradication of all sufferings. Besides, even those who reap the fruits of those rituals become proud and arrogant (just as men in the world are when they gain wealth, power, position etc.). They forget Thee and become subject to endless sufferings, and finally downfall overcomes them.

त्वल्लोकादन्यलोकः क्वनु भयरहितो यत् परार्धद्वयान्ते
त्वद्भीतः सत्यलोकेऽपि न सुखवसतिः पद्मभूः पद्मनाभ ।
एवं भावेप्यधर्मार्जित-बहुतमसां का कथा नारकाणां
तन्मे त्वं छिन्धि बन्धं वरद कृपणबन्धो कृपापूरसिन्धो ॥ 4 ॥

4. There is no sphere other than Thy transcendent state of Vaikuntha that is free from the fear of death and downfall. Even Satyaloka, O Lotus-navelled One, is not found to be a secure and happy place by the Lotus-born Brahma at the end of two Parardhas (that being the life-span of a Brahma). What then to speak of those who, in consequence of their unrighteous deeds, have incurred numerous sins and reside in hells. Therefore, O Friend of the Lowly, O Ocean of Mercy! Deign to cut off all my attachments to worldly life.

याथार्थ्यात्त्वन्मयस्यैव हि मम न विभो वस्तुतो बन्धमोक्षौ
मायाविद्यातनुभ्यां तव तु विरचितौ स्वप्नबोधोपमौ तौ ।
बद्धे जीवद्विमुक्तिं गतवति च भिदा तावती तावदेको
भुङ्क्ते देहद्रुमस्थो विषयफलरसा-न्नापरो निर्व्यथात्मा ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord! To me, who in truth am only Thyself, there is really neither bondage nor liberation. These conditions are created by Thy twin Power of Ignorance (Maya) and Knowledge (Vidya), and are comparable to the dream and the waking states. The difference between the one in the bondage of ignorance and the one liberated in life is only this much: the former perched on the tree of the body eats the fruits of his own deeds (through attachment caused by Ignorance) while the latter does not (because of non-attachment derived from Knowledge), and therefore remains free from all sorrows. [36]

जीवन्मुक्तत्व-मेवंविधमिति वचसा किं फलं दूरदूरे
तन्नामाशुद्धबुद्धेर्न च लघु मनसः शोधनं भक्तितोऽन्यत् ।
तन्मे विष्णो कृषीष्ठास्त्वयि कृतसकलप्रार्पणं भक्तिभारं
येन स्यां मङ्क्षु किञ्चिद्गुरुवचनमिलत् त्वत्प्रबोध-स्त्वदात्मा ॥ 6 ॥

6. Of what good are mere words about the condition of one liberated in the embodied state itself? It is something far off for a person of impure mind. Other than Bhakti there is no easy way of attaining to purity of mind (needed for attaining to that state). O Vishnu! May Thou therefore deign to bestow on me intense devotion characterised by absolute surrender of all deeds to Thee. With the purity of mind gained thereby and the instruction of the Guru, I shall soon attain to true enlightenment and union with Thee.[37]

शब्दब्रह्मण्यपीह प्रयतितमनसस्त्वां न जानन्ति केचित्
कष्टं वन्ध्यश्रमास्ते चिरतरमिह गां बिभ्रते निष्प्रसूतिम् ।
यस्यां विश्वाभिरामाः सकलमलहरा दिव्यलीलावताराः
सच्चित्सान्द्रं च रूपं तव न निगदितं ता न वाचं भ्रियासम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. There are some with mind wholly absorbed in Sabda-brahman (or study and exposition of the Vedas and other scriptures). But they have no knowledge of Thee (in spite of all their learning). Alas! their efforts are therefore sterile, and they are like owners of cows that never calve. May I not therefore indulge in the study, exposition or composition of works alien to the description of Thy blissful Form and Thy sportive Incarnations, which are spiritually inspiring and destructive of all mental inpurities.

यो यावान् यादृशो वा त्वमिति किमपि नैवावगच्छामि भूमन्-
नेवश्चानन्यभावः त्वदनुभजन-मेवाद्रिये चैद्यवैरिन् ।
त्वल्लिङ्गानां त्वदङ्घ्रि-प्रियजनसदसां दर्शनस्पर्शनादि-
र्भूयान्मे त्वत्प्रपूजानतिनुति-गुणकर्मानुकीर्त्यादरोऽपि ॥ 8 ॥

8. O All-pervading Being! O Destroyer of Sisupala! I am not able to comprehend Thy greatness or Thy nature even in the least. But despite my imperfect understanding of Thee, I shall continue to serve Thee wholeheartedly, depending on Thee as my sole support. May I be always blessed with opportunities of seeing Holy Images and contacting congregations of Thy devotees, and be endowed with devotion to the worship, salutation and praise of Thee as also the recital of the deeds and excellences of Thy Divine Self.[38]

यद्यल्लभ्येत तत्तत्तव समुपहृतं देव दासोऽस्मि तेऽहं
त्वद्गेहोन्मार्जनाद्यं भवतु मम मुहुः कर्म निर्मायमेव ।
सूर्याग्निब्राह्मणात्मादिषु लसितचतुर्बाहु-माराधये त्वां
त्वत्प्रेमार्द्रत्वरूपो मम सततमभिष्यन्दतां भक्तियोगः ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Lord! Whatever comes into my possession, I offer it unto Thee. I am Thy servant. Let me repeatedly do with utmost sincerity and interest such devotional duties as cleaning Thy temple! Let me perform the worship of Thy four-handed form conceived as manifesting in the solar orb, in fire, in holy men and in the Atman! Let my mind be ever in communion with Thee through devotion, which consists in the melting of heart into a continuous stream of love ever flowing towards Thee!

ऐक्यं ते दानहोमव्रत-नियमतपः सांख्ययोगै-र्दुरापं
त्वत्सङ्गेनैव गोप्यः किल सुकृतितमाः प्रापुरानन्दसान्द्रम् ।
भक्तेष्वन्येषु भूयस्स्वपि बहुमनुषे भक्तिमेव त्वमासां
तन्मे त्वद्भक्तिमेव द्रढय हर गदान् कृष्ण वातालयेश ॥ 10 ॥

10. That state of supremely blissful union with Thee, which is difficult to obtain through disciplines like charity, sacrifices, vows, self-control, austerity, knowledge and concentration, was attained by the blessed Gopikas of Vrindavana, through personal attachment to Thee as their own beloved. Numerous are Thy devotees, but it is this loving personal devotion of the Gopikas that has received Thy highest appreciation. Therefore, O Krishna! O Lord of Guruvayoor! May Thou strengthen devotion in me and destroy my ailments.

CANTO 95

SUPREMACY OF THE PATH OF DEVOTION

आदौ हैरण्यगर्भीं तनुमविकल-जीवात्मिका-मास्थितस्त्वं
जीवत्वं प्राप्य मायागुणगणखचितो वर्तसे विश्वयोने ।
तत्रोद्वृद्धेन सत्त्वेन तु गुणयुगलं भक्तिभावं गतेन
छित्वा सत्त्वं च हित्वा पुनरनुपहितो वर्तिताहे त्वमेव ॥ 1 ॥

1. O Thou, the Origin of all! In the beginning Thou didst manifest as the Hiranyagarbha, the collective and indiscrete state of Jivahood. Afterwards (in the process of evolution), Thou didst become separate individual Jivas by the association of the Gunas of Maya (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas) and their products (out of which the gross and subtle bodies distinguishing each Jiva were formed). Of these three Gunas, Sattva, when it becomes well developed and dominant, manifests as Bhakti and destroys the other two Gunas of Rajas and Tamas. Finally abandoning that Sattva also, I shall realise myself as Thyself, the pure unlimited Being without any attributes or adjuncts.

सत्त्वोन्मेषात् कदाचित् खलु विषयरसे दोषबोधेऽपि भूमन्
भूयोऽप्येषु प्रवृत्तिः सतमसि रजसि प्रोद्धते दुर्निवारा ।
चित्तं तावद्गुणाश्च ग्रथितमिह मिथस्तानि सर्वाणि रोद्धुं
तुर्ये त्वय्येकभक्तिः शरणमिति भवान् हंसरूपी न्यगादीत् ॥ 2 ॥

2. Sometimes, no doubt, when Sattva predominates, it is possible to realise that worldly enjoyments are trivial and harmful. But, it is beyond the power of man to resist the attraction of these enjoyments when Rajas and Tamas begin to operate powerfully once again. For, the mind and the three Gunas of Prakriti are closely interlinked, (and as a result, when any of them dominates, the mind comes to be powerfully influenced by it). So if the Gunas are to be effectively and permanently resisted and overcome, the only way is to have the devotion characterised by total dedication to Thee, the one who transcends the three Gunas. (For on such a dedicated soul Thy transcendent power operates and

works for his uplift). So didst Thou in the form of a Swan instruct (Sanaka and his brother sages).

सन्ति श्रेयांसि भूयांस्यपि रुचिभिदया कर्मिणां निर्मितानि
क्षुद्रानन्दाश्च सान्ता बहुविधगतयः कृष्ण तेभ्यो भवेयुः ।
त्वञ्चाचख्याथ सख्ये ननु महिततमां श्रेयसां भक्तिमेकां
त्वद्भक्त्यानन्दतुल्यः खलु विषयजुषां सम्मदः केन वा स्यात् ॥ 3 ॥

3. For the spiritual evolution of such men as are fit only for the discipline of action, there are many paths suited to their taste and competence laid down in the texts made by several great sages (like Jaimini, Vyasa, Patanjali, Brihaspati etc.). Among them, O Krishna, there are several paths which lead to goals that yield only temporary and trivial felicities. Thou didst, however, prescribe to Thy friend Uddhava the path of devotion as the most glorious means for the attainment of the supreme spiritual welfare of man (Moksha). How can the joy of those attached to these objects of the world come anywhere near the bliss of devotion to Thee?[39]

त्वद्भक्त्या तुष्टबुद्धेः सुखमिह चरतो विच्युताशस्य चाशाः
सर्वाः स्युः सौख्यमय्यः सलिलकुहरगस्येव तोयैकमय्यः ।
सोऽयं खल्विन्द्रलोकं कमलजभवनं योगसिद्धीश्च हृद्याः
नाकाङ्क्षत्येतदास्तां स्वयमनुपतिते मोक्षसौख्येऽप्यनीहः ॥ 4 ॥

4. A devotee who moves about abandoning all worldly desires owing to the complete satisfaction he derives from the practice of devotion to Thee, experiences only happiness in all conditions of life, just as an aquatic creature living in a deep cavern of a lake feels its whole environment as watery. He desires not for the sphere of Indra or of Brahma or for the lure of the eight kinds of Yogic powers. But lo! not to speak of these attainments, he is indifferent even for the joy of liberation which comes automatically to him without his seeking!

त्वद्भक्तो बाध्यमानोऽपि च विषयरसै-रिन्द्रियाशान्तिहेतो-
र्भक्त्यैवाक्रम्यमाणैः पुनरपि खलु तैर्दुर्बलैर्नाभिजय्यः ।

सप्तार्चिर्दीपितार्चि-र्दहति किल यथा भूरिदारुप्रपञ्चं
त्वद्भक्त्यौघे तथैव प्रदहति दुरितं दुर्मदः क्वेन्द्रियाणाम् ॥ 5 ॥

5. Even if by chance Thy devotee happens to be ensnared by the pleasures of sense life owing to his lack of control over his senses, he cannot be completely overcome by these weak forces, as they cannot stand the counter-attack of Bhakti. Just as a well-lit conflagration burns up a thick forest, the power of constant devotion will thoroughly destroy all sins and sinful tendencies. What can the power of the senses do under these circumstances?

चित्तार्द्रीभावमुच्चै-र्वपुषि च पुलकं हर्षबाष्पञ्च हित्वा
चित्तं शुद्ध्येत्कथं वा किमु बहुतपसा विद्यया वीतभक्तेः ।
त्वद्गाथास्वाद-सिद्धाञ्जनसतत-मरीमृज्यमानोऽयमात्मा
चक्षुर्वत् तत्त्वसूक्ष्मं भजति न तु तथाभ्यस्तया तर्ककोट्या ॥ 6 ॥

6. How can the mind become pure unless the heart melts in love, hairs stand on end all over the body, and eyes get flooded with tears of joy. Of what use are austerities and learning if devotion be lacking? All the highly sophisticated arguments do not reveal Thee; but just as objects are revealed by eyesight, Thy subtle Truth is intuited by the mind that is refined by the constant application of the collyrium of devotional discipline consisting in hearing the recitals of Thy divine excellences and the rest.

ध्यानं ते शीलयेयं समतनुसुख-बद्धासनो नासिकाग्र-
न्यस्ताक्षः पूरकाद्यै-र्जितपवनपथ-श्चित्तपद्मं त्ववाञ्चम् ।
ऊर्ध्वाग्रं भावयित्वा रविविधुशिखिनः संविचिन्त्योपरिष्टा-
त्तत्रस्थं भावये त्वां सजलजलधर-श्यामलं कोमलाङ्गम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. To practise meditation on Thee, I shall sit erect with the body straight and eye gazing, as it were, on the tip of the nose. After controlling the vital energies through the practice of Pranayama, I shall imagine the naturally downward-drooping heart-lotus as erect and full-blown, and mentally locate in it the sun, the moon and the fire, one above another in the order stated. I shall then contemplate on Thee as

seated therein, with a beautiful body dark-blue like a rain cloud.

आनीलश्लक्ष्णकेशं ज्वलितमकरसत्कुण्डलं मन्दहास-
स्यन्दार्द्रं कौस्तुभश्री-परिगतवनमालोरु-हाराभिरामम् ।
श्रीवत्साङ्कं सुबाहुं मृदुलसदुदरं काञ्चनच्छायचेलं
चारुस्निग्धोरु-मम्भोरुहललितपदं भावयेऽहं भवन्तम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. I meditate on Thy form which has blue and lustrous locks of hair, brilliant fish-marked ear rings, a graceful and benevolent look owing to the constant smile on the lips, the mole called Srivatsa on the chest, long and powerful arms, soft and shapely abdomen, garment of golden yellow colour, comely well-shaped thighs, and feet tender and lovely like the lotus.

सर्वाङ्गेष्वङ्ग-रङ्गत्कुतुक-मतिमुहुर्धारयन्नीश चित्तं
तत्राप्येकत्र युञ्जे वदनसरसिजे सुन्दरे मन्दहासे
तत्रालीनन्तु चेतः परमसुखचिदद्वैतरूपे वितन्व-
न्नन्यन्नो चिन्तयेयं मुहुरिति समुपारूढयोगो भवेयम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. After concentrating the mind again and again with joy on each of Thy limbs and on the totality of them, I shall let it abide in a single location, namely, Thy charming lotus face beaming with a smile. On the mind so fixed being absorbed in the supreme Bliss-Consciousness that is Non-duality, I shall not think of anything else, but remain steady in that state of communion by repeated effort.[40]

इत्थं त्वद्ध्यानयोगे सति पुनरणिमा-द्यष्टसंसिद्ध्यस्ताः
दूरश्रुत्यादयोऽपि ह्यहमहमिकया सम्पतेयुर्मुरारे ।
त्वत्सम्प्राप्तौ विलम्बावह-मखिलमिदं नाद्रिये कामयेऽहं
त्वामेवानन्दपूर्णं पवनपुरपते पाहि मां सर्वतापात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord! While I am practising this Yoga of meditation, the group of eight Yogic powers as also clairvoyance and the like will come rushing to me jostling one another. Recognising that they only delay one's attainment of Thee,

I shall reject them as trivial. I long only for Thee, the plenitude of Bliss. May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, deign to save me from all miseries!

CANTO 96

DEVOTION AS A SELF-SUFFICIENT DISCIPLINE

त्वं हि ब्रह्मैव साक्षात् परमुरुमहिम-न्नक्षराणामकार-
स्तारो मन्त्रेषु राज्ञां मनुरसि मुनिषु त्वं भृगुर्नारदोऽपि ।
प्रह्लादो दानवानां पशुषु च सुरभिः पक्षिणां वैनतेयो
नागानामस्यनन्तः सुरसरिदपि च स्रोतसां विश्वमूर्ते ।। 1 ।।

1. O Thou of Infinite Greatness, of whom the whole universe is the body! Thou art verily Brahman perceptible. Among letters, Thou art 'A.' Among Mantras, Thou art the saving sound Om. Among kings, Thou art Manu. Among sages, Thou art Bhrigu and Narada. Among Danavas, Thou art Prahlada. Among animals, Thou art the heavenly cow Kamadhenu. Among birds, Thou art Garuda. Among serpents, Thou art Ananta. Among rivers, Thou art the heavenly Ganga.

ब्रह्मण्यानां बलिस्त्वं क्रतुषु च जपयज्ञोऽसि वीरेषु पार्थो
भक्तानामुद्धवस्त्वं बलमसि बलिनां धाम तेजस्विनां त्वम् ।
नास्त्यन्तस्त्वद्विभूते-र्विकसदतिशयं वस्तु सर्वं त्वमेव
त्वं जीवस्त्वं प्रधानं यदिह भवद्ृते तन्न किञ्चित् प्रपञ्चे ।। 2 ।।

2. Among persons devoted to holy men, Thou art Bali. Among sacrifices, Thou art Japayajna (continuous repetition of Mantras or divine names). Among heroes Thou art Partha (Arjuna, the third of the Pandavas). Among devotees, Thou art Uddhava. Of the strong, Thou art the strength. Of the majestic, Thou art grandeur. Thou art the individual self (Jiva) as also primeval matter (Prakriti). There is no

end to the manifestation of Thy glory. Whatever is outstandingly brilliant art Thou. There is nothing in the universe that is not included in Thee.

धर्मं वर्णाश्रमाणां श्रुतिपथविहितं त्वत्परत्वेन भक्त्या
कुर्वन्तोऽन्तर्विरागे विकसति शनकैः सन्त्यजन्तो लभन्ते।
सत्तास्फूर्ति-प्रियत्वात्मक-मखिलपदार्थेषु भिन्नेष्वभिन्नं
निर्मूलं विश्वमूलं परममहमिति त्वद्विबोधं विशुद्धम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. Non-attachment sprouts and matures gradually in a person who performs, in a spirit of devotion and dedication to Thee, the duties of life accruing to him according to his station in life and as prescribed by the Vedas. When he is fully non-attached, he renounces those very duties and attains to the true knowledge of Thee, which consists in the experience—'I am that Supreme Being, of the nature of Sat, Chit and Ananda, the one indivisible among divided entities, the cause of all but not caused by anything.'

ज्ञानं कर्मापि भक्तिस्त्रितयमिह भवत्प्रापकं तत्र तावन्-
निर्विण्णानामशेषे विषय इह भवेत् ज्ञानयोगेऽधिकारः ।
सक्तानां कर्मयोगस्त्वयि हि विनिहितो ये तु नात्यन्तसक्ता
नाप्यत्यन्तं विरक्तास्त्वयि च धृतरसा भक्तियोगो ह्यमीषाम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. In regard to the three spiritual paths leading to Thee, namely, the paths of knowledge, action and devotion, persons endowed with intense dispassion for everything in life are competent for the path of knowledge, while the path of action, in which all one's doings are to be dedicated to Thee, is meant for those who are still subject to worldly attachment. And to those who are neither intensely attached nor intensely dispassionate, but at the same time experience a sense of joy in thinking of Thee, the path of devotion is prescribed.

ज्ञानं त्वद्भक्ततां वा लघु सुकृतवशान्मर्त्यलोके लभन्ते
तस्मात्तत्रैव जन्म स्पृहयति भगवन् नाकगो नारको वा ।
आविष्टं मां तु दैवाद्भवजलनिधि-पोतायिते मर्त्यदेहे
त्वं कृत्वा कर्णधारं गुरुमनुगुण-वातायितस्तारयेथाः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Knowledge and devotion are easily attained by one born in the world of men if one has some good deeds to one's credit. Therefore, O Lord, the Jivas in both heaven and hell desire to be born as men. Endowed, as I fortunately have been, with the boat of a human body for crossing the ocean of Samsara, may Thou be pleased to give me a spiritual teacher as my boatman and Thyself become the favourable wind that would help me reach the other shore.

अव्यक्तं मार्गयन्तः श्रुतिभिरपि नयैः केवलज्ञानलुब्धाः
क्लिश्यन्तेऽतीव सिद्धिं बहुतरजनुषामन्त एवाप्नुवन्ति ।
दूरस्थः कर्मयोगोऽपि च परमफले नन्वयं भक्तियोग-
स्त्वामूलादेव हृद्यस्त्वरितमयि भवत्प्रापको वर्धतां मे ॥ 6 ॥

6. Those who are votaries of pure knowledge labour hard with the aid of Vedic revelation and logic to arrive at the unmanifested and ineffable Absolute, and attain to that goal only after innumerable lives of struggle. Karma Yoga, again, is only an indirect means to Mukti and is therefore remote from its final result. But the path of Bhakti is sweet from the very beginning and quick in leading a devotee to Thee. May I, O Lord, have more and more of Bhakti!

ज्ञानायैवातियत्नं मुनिरपवदते ब्रह्मतत्त्वं तु शृण्वन्
गाढं त्वत्पादभक्तिं शरणमयति यस्तस्य मुक्तिः कराग्रे ।
त्वद्ध्यानेपीह तुल्या पुनरसुकरता चित्तचाञ्चल्यहेतो-
रभ्यासादाशु शक्यं तदपि वशयितुं त्वत्कृपाचारुताभ्याम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Sage Vyasa decries (in the Bhagavata and other Puranas) the herculean efforts that some make in following the path of knowledge. Whoever after understanding the truth of Brahman from scriptures, resorts unswervingly to the practice of love and service of Thee (in place of going after the Jnana discipline to realise Brahman directly), attains to Mukti without much difficulty. Even though, owing to the waywardness of the mind, meditation on Thee is no less difficult than the discipline of knowledge, it is possible to bring the mind under control through repeated practice. Besides, meditation becomes easy owing to the attractiveness of Thy form, and (above all) by the possibility of Thy grace.[41]

निर्विण्णः कर्ममार्गे खलु विषमतमे त्वत्कथादौ च गाढं
जातश्रद्धोऽपि कामानयि भुवनपते नैव शक्नोमि हातुम् ।
तद्भूयो निश्चयेन त्वयि निहितमना दोषबुद्ध्या भजंस्तान्
पुष्णीयां भक्तिमेव त्वयि हृदयगते मङ्क्षु नङ्क्ष्यन्ति सङ्गाः ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Lord of all the worlds! Even after developing revulsion to the extremely difficult life of adherence to Vedic ritualism and cultivating deep faith in the discipline of listening to Thy deeds and excellences, I am not able to abandon all the desires of my heart. I shall, therefore, try to overcome these by resorting to them with a discriminative mind that is fully aware of their harmfulness and is firmly fixed on Thee. I shall strengthen my devotion to Thee; for when Thou abidest in the heart, worldly attachments perish in no time.

कश्चित् क्लेशार्जितार्थ-क्षयविमलमति-र्नुद्यमानो जनौघैः
प्रागेवं प्राह विप्रो न खलु मम जनः कालकर्मग्रहा वा ।
चेतो मे दुःखहेतु-स्तदिह गुणगणं भावयत्सर्वकारी-
त्युक्त्वा शान्तो गतस्त्वां मम च कुरु विभो तादृशीं चित्तशान्तिम् ॥

9. Once a Brahmana, who had acquired great wealth through hard work, happened to lose it all. His experience generated in him discrimination and renunciation, and attaining purity of mind thereby, he took to the life of an Avadhuta or all-renouncing ascetic. Persecuted by the populace (for his strange way of life), he said: 'The cause of my sufferings is neither these people, nor time, nor Karma, nor planets. My own mind is the cause of my misery. Itself a product of the Gunas (or dispositions) of Prakriti, it causes all actions to be done, and superimposes these and other products of the Gunas on the Atman.' Thinking thus, he remained at peace. O Lord! Deign to give me also that kind of mental poise!

ऐलः प्रागुर्वशीं प्रत्यतिविवशमनाः सेवमानश्चिरं तां
गाढं निर्विद्य भूयो युवतिसुखमिदं क्षुद्रमेवेति गायन् ।
त्वद्भक्तिं प्राप्य पूर्णः सुखतरमचरत् तद्वदुद्धूय सङ्गं
भक्तोत्तंसं क्रिया मां पवनपुरपते हन्त मे रुन्धि रोगान् ॥ 10 ॥

10. King Pururavas, the son of Ila, was deeply involved in a love affair with Urvasi, a heavenly damsel. After spending a long time in her company, he developed a mood of extreme renunciation and came to the realisation that the so-called sex-enjoyment is most trivial and wretched. Attaining to devotion for Thee, and through that to life's fulfilment, he moved about happily, singing Thy glory. Likewise, O Lord of Guruvayoor, uprooting all my sensuous tendencies, make me the best of Thy devotees, and free me from all my ailments!

CANTO 97

MYSTERY OF DIVINE MAYA

त्रैगुण्याद्भिन्नरूपं भवति हि भुवने हीनमध्योत्तमं यत्
ज्ञानं श्रद्धा च कर्ता वसतिरपि सुखं कर्म चाहारभेदाः ।
त्वत्क्षेत्रत्वन्निषेवादि तु यदिह पुनस्त्वत्परं तत्तु सर्वं
प्राहुर्नैर्गुण्यनिष्ठं तदनुभजनतो मङ्क्षु सिद्धो भवेयम् ॥ 1 ॥

1. All entities in this world like knowledge, faith, agony, happiness, action and food, are diversified by the three Gunas, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and are graded as high, middling or low (according to the preponderence of these Gunas in that order). But entities and activities that are directly connected with Thee like Thy temples and Thy services are said to originate from beyond the three Gunas. With the help of these, may I become free quickly!

त्वय्येव न्यस्तचित्तः सुखमयि विचरन् सर्वचेष्टास्त्वदर्थं
त्वद्भक्तैः सेव्यमानानपि चरितचरानाश्रयन् पुण्यदेशान् ।
दस्यौ विप्रे मृगादिष्वपि च सममति-र्मुच्यमानावमान-
स्पर्धासूयादिदोषः सततमखिलभूतेषु संपूजये त्वाम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. With my mind resting in Thee and with all my actions dedicated to Thee, I shall go about from one holy

place to another where Thy devotees are now living or had once lived. Entertaining the attitude of even-mindedness towards robbers, good men and animals, and abandoning such undesirable mental attitudes as craving for honour, resentment at dishonour, enmity, envy and the like, may I adore Thee as manifested in all beings!

त्वद्भावो यावदेषु स्फुरति न विशदं तावदेवं ह्युपास्ति
कुर्वन्नैकात्म्यबोधे झटिति विकसति त्वन्मयोऽहं चरेयम् ।
त्वद्धर्मस्यास्य तावत् किमपि न भगवन् प्रस्तुतस्य प्रणाश-
स्तस्मात्सर्वात्मनैव प्रदिश मम विभो भक्तिमार्गं मनोज्ञम् ॥ 3 ॥

3. I shall continue to perform Thy worship as long as the experience that 'Thou art the all' does not arise. Soon shall I attain to this experience of the unity of all existence (by following the path of devotion), whenceforth I shall move about with a sense of complete identification with Thee. O Lord! for one traversing the path of Thy Dharma (Bhagavata Dharma or path of devotion) there is no downfall or destruction. Therefore bestow on me the capacity to follow the path of devotion, the most attractive of all spiritual paths.

तं चैनं भक्तियोगं द्रढयितुमयि मे साध्यमारोग्यमायु-
र्दिष्ट्या तत्रापि सेव्यं तव चरणमहो भेषजायेव दुग्धम् ।
मार्कण्डेयो हि पूर्वं गणकनिगदित-द्वादशाब्दायुरुच्चैः
सेवित्वा वत्सरं त्वां तव भटनिवहै-र्द्रावयामास मृत्युम् ॥ 4 ॥

4. In order to be firmly established in the practice of Bhakti, one needs a long life and good health. It is a fortunate circumstance that to attain to these also, it is Thy feet that have to be served. It is just like having milk prescribed as medicine for one's ailment (for while it cures, it is pleasant to take and it satisfies hunger too). Look at the sage Markandeya. Knowing from astrologers that he had only twelve years of life, he adored Thee with intense devotion for one year, and when Death approached the sage at the appointed time, he (Death) was driven away by Thy emissaries.

मार्कण्डेयश्चिरायुः स खलु पुनरपि त्वत्परः पुष्पभद्रा-

तीरे निन्ये तपस्य-न्नतुलसुखरतिः षट् तु मन्वन्तराणि ।

देवेन्द्रः सप्तमस्तं सुरयुवति-मरुन्मन्मथै-र्मोहयिष्यन्

योगोष्मप्लुष्यमाणैर्न तु पुनरशकत्त्वज्जनं निर्जयेत् कः ॥ 5 ॥

5. Markandeya, who was devoted to Thee and was endowed thus with a long lease of life, then practised spiritual disciplines on the banks of the river Pushpabhadra and spent the period covered by six Manvantaras in the bliss of Brahman. In the seventh Manvantara, Indra, seventh in order, tried to subject him to the infatuation of sense life with the aid of heavenly damsels, sweet, gentle southern breeze, Cupid and the like, but he and his accomplices failed in their effort, as they were rendered powerless by the efficiency of the fire of spirituality issuing from the sage. Who can overcome Thy devotee?

प्रीत्या नारायणाख्य-स्त्वमथ नरसखः प्राप्तवानस्य पार्श्वं

तुष्ट्या तोष्टूयमानः स तु विविधवरैर्लोभितो नानुमेने ।

द्रष्टुं मायां त्वदीयं किल पुनरवृणोद्-भक्तितृप्तान्तरात्मा

मायादुःखानभिज्ञ-स्तदपि मृगयते नूनमाश्चर्यहेतोः ॥ 6 ॥

6. Thou in Thy form as sage Narayana, along with Nara, didst then go to Markandeya, and being praised by him repeatedly with great joy, offer him various boons, but he accepted none of them, being satisfied fully with devotion to Thee. Finally he chose the boon of seeing Thy Maya. The sage who had never experienced the sufferings from Maya must have sought this boon to have an idea of it out of sheer curiosity.

याते त्वय्याशु वाताकुल-जलदगल-त्तोयपूर्णातिघूर्णत्-

सप्तार्णोराशिमग्ने जगति स तु जले सम्भ्रमन् वर्षकोटीः ।

दीनः प्रैक्षिष्ट दूरे वटदलशयनं कञ्चिदाश्चर्यबालं

त्वामेव श्यामलाङ्गं वदनसरसिजन्यस्त-पादाङ्गुलीकम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. Immediately after Thy departure, Markandeya saw in the wake of heavy winds and clouds, torrential rain

falling and the seven seas overflowing and deluging the whole world. In that deluge Markandeya found himself a helpless and weary wanderer for crores of years. At length he saw at a distance a Wondrous Infant, blue in complexion, lying on a banyan leaf and sucking Its toes with Its lotus mouth. The Infant was none but Thyself.

दृष्ट्वा त्वां हृष्टरोमा त्वरितमुपगतः स्प्रष्टुकामो मुनीन्द्रः
श्वासेनान्तर्निविष्टः पुनरिह सकलं दृष्टवान् विष्टपौघम् ।
भूयोऽपि श्वासवातै-र्बहिरनुपतितो वीक्षितस्त्वत्कटाक्षै-
र्मोदादाश्लेष्टुकामस्त्वयि पिहिततनौ स्वाश्रमे प्राग्वदासीत् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Seeing Thee, the sage approached in great haste and excitement to touch Thee, whereupon he was caught in Thy breath and drawn within, where he saw the whole universe (that he had been seeing outside). Next, thrown out with Thy out-going breath, he found Thee graciously glancing at him. In great joy Markandeya again approached to embrace Thee, whereupon Thou didst disappear from sight. And, lo! Markendeya found himself once more in his own Asrama on the banks of Pushpabhadra, and everything was as before.

गौर्या सार्धं तदग्रे पुरभिदथ गतस्त्वत्प्रिय-प्रेक्षणार्थी
सिद्धानेवास्य दत्वा स्वयमय-मजरामृत्युतादीन् गतोऽभूत् ।
एवं त्वत्सेवयैव स्मररिपुरपि स प्रीयते येन तस्मा-
न्मूर्तित्रय्यात्मकस्त्वं ननु सकलनियन्तेति सुव्यक्तमासीत् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Lord Siva, along with Gauri, once went to see this sage Markendeya, Thy devotee, and departed after giving him several boons like freedom from old age and death—powers which he had already attained by his own efforts. It is seen from this how by Thy service even Siva is pleased. So it is clear that Thou art the one Supreme Being that has assumed the form of Trimurti (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva).

त्र्यंशेस्मिन् सत्यलोके विधिहरिपुरभि-न्मन्दिराण्यूर्ध्वमूर्ध्वं
तेभ्योऽप्यूर्ध्वं तु मायाविकृतिविरहितो भाति वैकुण्ठलोकः ।
तत्र त्वं कारणाम्भस्यपि पशुपकुले शुद्धसत्त्वैकरूपी
सच्चिद्ब्रह्माद्वयात्मा पवनपुरपते पाहि मां सर्वरोगात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. In the region of Satyaloka, placed one above the other, are located the three heavens of Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara. Above them, transcending all the worlds that are the effects of Maya, is the realm of Vaikuntha. There in the midst of Causal Waters as also in the house of the cowherd Nanda, Thou, who art of the nature of Sat-chit-ananda, dost manifest in a form of Suddhasattva (non-material stuff without any taint of Rajas and Tamas). May Thou, O Lord of Guruvayoor, who dost so manifest, deign to cure me of my ailments!

CANTO 98

IN PRAISE OF THE IMPERSONAL ABSOLUTE

यस्मिन्नेत-द्विभातं यत इदमभवद्येन चेदं य एत-
द्योऽस्मादुत्तीर्णरूपः खलु सकलमिदं भासितं यस्य भासा ।
यो वाचां दूरदूरे पुनरपि मनसां यस्य देवा मुनीन्द्रा
नो विद्युस्तत्त्वरूपं किमु पुनरपरे कृष्ण तस्मै नमस्ते ॥ 1 ॥

1. He who is the Ground on which this world manifestation appears; who is both the material and the efficient cause of it; into whom it dissolves; who manifests as all the world but none-the-less transcends them all and forms the light of Consciousness by which, and to which, they are revealed; who is far beyond the scope of exact description by words and conception by mind; whose true nature neither the Devas nor the sages have known, much less others—to that Krishna my salutations![42]

जन्माथो कर्म नाम स्फुटमिह गुणदोषादिकं वा न यस्मिन्
लोकानामूतये यः स्वयमनुभजते तानि मायानुसारी ।
बिभ्रच्छक्तीररूपोऽपि च बहुतररूपोऽवभात्यद्भुतात्मा
तस्मै कैवल्यधाम्ने पररसपरिपूर्णाय विष्णो नमस्ते ॥ 2 ॥

2. My salutations to Thee, O Vishnu (the All-pervading Being), the home of freedom and the fullness of Supreme Bliss! —to Thee who hast in truth no birth, no obligations to fulfil, no bondage of good and evil, but who, for bestowing Thy abounding grace on Jivas, nevertheless dost voluntarily adopt these limitations through the play of Thy mysterious Maya, who through Thy Powers (Saktis) of Vidya and Avidya dost assume, in so puzzling a manner, diverse forms in spite of being formless!

नो तिर्यञ्चं न मर्त्यं न च सुरमसुरं न स्त्रियं नो पुमांसं
न द्रव्यं कर्म जातिं गुणमपि सदसद्वापि ते रूपमाहुः ।
शिष्टं यत् स्यान्निषेधे सति निगमशतै-र्लक्षणावृत्तितस्तत्
कृच्छ्रेणावेद्यमानं परमसुखमयं भाति तस्मै नमस्ते ॥ 3 ॥

3. The wise describe Thee by a series of negations— as neither human nor non-human; as neither divine nor demoniacal; as neither male nor female; as neither existent nor non-existent; and as without any of the descriptive specifications of the world of objects like substance, attribute, function, and species. Residual after all such negations, and described with great difficulty by the Upanishads through implied references, shines the Pure Blissful Awareness that Thou art. To that Being my salutations!

मायायां बिम्बितस्त्वं सृजति महदहङ्कारतन्मात्रभेदै-
र्भूतग्रामेन्द्रियाद्यैरपि सकलजगत् स्वप्नसङ्कल्पकल्पम् ।
भूयः संहृत्य सर्वं कमठ इव पदान्यात्मना कालशक्त्या
गम्भीरे जायमाने तमसि वितिमिरो भासि तस्मै नमस्ते ॥ 4 ॥

4. Reflected, as it were, in the mirror of Maya, Thou dost project this whole creation consisting of all the twenty four categories from Mahat to the senses and their objects, just as dream objects are projected in dream. Again, by the working of Thy own power known as Time, Thou dost withdraw it all back into Thyself as a tortoise its limbs. And there in that Abysmal Darkness of total obliteration, Thou shinest as the self-revealing Pure Consciousness with no object to reveal. To Thee my salutations!

शब्दब्रह्मेति कर्मेत्यणुरिति भगवन् काल इत्यालपन्ति
त्वामेकं विश्वहेतुं सकलमयतया सर्वथा कल्प्यमानम् ।
वेदान्तैर्यत्तु गीतं पुरुषपर-चिदात्माभिधं तत्तु तत्त्वं
प्रेक्षामात्रेण मूलप्रकृति-विकृतिकृत् कृष्ण तस्मै नमस्ते ।। 5 ।।

5. O Lord! Being the All-formed (or the one that has become the many) and therefore conceivable in any form, Thou, the Cause of all the worlds, art verily the Being called by different names as Primeval Sound (Sabda-Brahman), Karma, Atom, Time, Atman and so on. Salutations to Thee, O Krishna, who art verily that Supreme Truth described in the Vedantic scriptures as Purusha (Indwelling Spirit), Para (Supreme Being), Pure Consciousness and so on, who by a mere glance dost set the Root Matter (Prakriti) in motion to diversify itself into its various evolutes that form the manifested universe.

सत्त्वेनासत्तया वा न च खलु सदसत्वेन निर्वाच्यरूपा
धत्ते यासावविद्या गुणफणिमतिव-द्विश्वदृश्यावभासम् ।
विद्यात्वं सैव याता श्रुतिवचनलवै-र्यत्कृपास्यन्दलाभे
संसारारण्य-सद्यस्त्रुटन-परशुतामेति तस्मै नमस्ते ।। 6 ।।

6. Avidya (Ignorance), which cannot be described either as existing or as non-existing or as a combination of the two, apparently manifests, just like the snake seen on the rope, this whole world of objectivity (along with the sense of identification of the 'self' with aspects of it like the body, mind etc.). But when the current of Thy grace sets in, this Avidya itself gets transformed into Vidya (Knowledge) which, with the help of a few sentences of the Vedic revelation, becomes a veritable axe for clearing the forest of Samsara.[43]

भूषासु स्वर्णवद्वा जगति घटशरावादिके मृत्तिकाव-
त्तत्त्वे सञ्चिन्त्यमाने स्फुरति तदधुनाप्यद्वितीयं वपुस्ते ।
स्वप्नद्रष्टुः प्रबोधे तिमिरलयविधौ जीर्णरज्जोश्च यद्व-
द्विद्यालाभे तथैव स्फुटमपि विकसेत् कृष्ण तस्मै नमस्ते ।। 7 ।।

7. By reflecting on the true nature of things, it is recognised that even when this world of multiplicity is perceived, it is only Thy non-dual Self (as their material cause) that is apprehended, just as gold only is seen when ornaments are perceived, and clay, when pots are seen. When knowledge dawns, what happens is that this fact becomes crystal clear (through the total sublation of the objective world into Thyself, their substratum), just as the true nature of dream objects becomes evident on awakening, and of the worn-out rope, on the dispersal of darkness. To Thee, O Krishna, my salutations!

यद्भीत्योदेति सूर्यो दहति च दहनो वाति वायुस्तथान्ये
यद्भीताः पद्मजाद्याः पुनरुचितबलीनाहरन्तेऽनुकालम् ।
येनैवारोपिताः प्राङ्निजपदमपि ते च्याविताश्च पश्चा-
त्तस्मै विश्वं नियन्त्रे वयमपि भवते कृष्ण कुर्मः प्रणामम् ॥ 8 ॥

8. Fearing whom the sun rises, the fire burns, and the wind blows; for fear of whom Brahma and other deities perform their cosmic functions as punctual offerings; by whom all these deities are installed in their places at the beginning of creation and afterwards removed—to Thee, O Krishna, who thus dost regulate the whole universe, my salutations!

त्रैलोक्यं भावयन्तं त्रिगुणमयमिदं त्र्यक्षरस्यैकवाच्यं
त्रीशानामैक्यरूपं त्रिभिरपि निगमै-र्गीयमानस्वरूपम् ।
तिस्रोवस्था विदन्तं त्रियुगजनिजुषं त्रिक्रमाक्रान्तविश्वं
त्रैकाल्ये भेदहीनं त्रिभिरहमनिशं योगभेदैर्भजे त्वाम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. Thou dost manifest the *three* worlds with the help of the *three* Gunas. Thou art the implication of the Pranava (Om) with its *three* letters. Thou art the one being that manifests as the *three* Deities (Trimurti), Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. It is Thy nature that is declared in the *three* Vedas. Thou art the Pure Consciousness that witnesses the *three* states of waking, dream and sleep. Thou dost incarnate Thyself in the *three* Yugas of Treta, Dwapara and Kali. Thou didst measure the whole universe with Thy *three* strides. Thou art without any change in the *three* parts of time, present, past and

future. I worship Thee always with the *three* forms of communion—Karma, Bhakti and Jnana.

सत्यं शुद्धं विबुद्धं जयति तव वपुर्नित्यमुक्तं निरीहं
निर्द्वन्द्वं निर्विकारं निखिलगुणगण-व्यञ्जनाधारभूतम् ।
निर्मूलं निर्मलं तन्निरवधिमहिमोल्लासि निर्लीनमन्त-
र्निस्सङ्गानां मुनीनां निरुपम-परमानन्द-सान्द्रप्रकाशम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. There shines Thy Being—eternal, immaculate, ever awake, ever free, desireless, transcending the pairs of opposites, changeless, conserving and manifesting all values, causeless, free from the taint of ignorance, inconceivably great, latent in hearts free from attachments, blissful without a parallel, and luminous with the light of Consciousness solidified.

दुर्वारं द्वादशारं त्रिशतपरिमिलत्-षष्टिपर्वाभिवीतं
सम्भ्राम्यत् क्रूरवेगं क्षणमनु जगदाच्छिद्य सन्धावमानम् ।
चक्रं ते कालरूपं व्यथयतु न तु मां त्वत्पदैकावलम्बं
विष्णो कारुण्यसिन्धो पवनपुरपते पाहि सर्वामयौघात् ॥ 11 ॥

11. O Lord Vishnu! O Merciful One! May I, whose sole refuge is Thy feet, be free from the afflictions of Thy irreversible wheel of Time, having the twelve months of the year for its spokes and three hundred and sixty days for its teeth, and ever running forward, destroying the world of Becoming at every moment of its terrific revolution. O Lord of Guruvayoor! Deign to save me from my ailments!

CANTO 99

IN PRAISE OF THE DIVINE PERSON

विष्णोर्वीर्याणि को वा कथयतु धरणेः कश्च रेणून्मिमीते
यस्यैवाङ्घ्रित्रयेण-त्रिजगदभिमतं मोदते पूर्णसम्पत् ।
योऽसौ विश्वानि धत्ते प्रियमिह परमं धाम तस्याभियायां
त्वद्भक्ता यत्र माद्य-न्त्यमृतरस-मरन्दस्य यत्र प्रवाहः ॥ 1 ॥

1. To recount exhaustively the glories of the All-pervading Being, Maha-Vishnu, who contains the whole universe in Himself, is as impossible as counting the particles of dust constituting the earth. The whole world is happy and prosperous because of the contact of Thy feet when Thou didst measure the worlds with Thy three strides. May I attain to that supreme and blessed State of Thine called Vaikuntha, where the blissful honey of Moksha flows, and where Thy devotees are inebriated with the joy of Thy service!

आद्यायाशेषकर्त्रे प्रतिनिमिषनवीनाय भर्त्रे विभूते-
र्भक्तात्मा विष्णवे यः प्रदिशति हविरादीनि यज्ञार्चनादौ ।
कृष्णाद्यं जन्म यो वा महदिह महतो वर्णयेत्सोऽयमेव
प्रीतः पूर्णो यशोभि-स्त्वरितमभिसरेत् प्राप्यमन्ते पदं ते ॥ २ ॥

2. A true devotee is ever blissful and overflowing with praiseworthy qualities, and he attains to Thy State immediately following death. For he is ever engaged in recounting Thy transcendent spiritual glory manifest in Thy Incarnations like Sri Krishna, and in making, under the impulse of deep devotion, offerings in Yagas and other forms of worship to Thee, Mahavishnu—who art the Eternal Being, the one Will operating everywhere and in everything, the ever-renewing display of novelty revealed in creation, and the Lord of all majesties and graces.

हे स्तोतारः कवीन्द्रास्तमिह खलु यथा चेतयध्वे तथैव
व्यक्तं वेदस्य सारं प्रणुवत जननोपात्त-लीलाकथाभिः ।
जानन्तश्चास्य नामा-न्यखिलसुखकराणीति सङ्कीर्तयध्वं
हे विष्णो कीर्तनाद्यै स्तव खलु महतस्तत्त्वबोधं भजेयम् ॥ ३ ॥

3. O you poet-laudators (who prostitute your powers for the vain praise of the achievements of kings and the beauty of women)! Why not dedicate your gifts, and attempt your best, to expound the Lord's doings in His sportive Incarnations? O great Vedists and Vedantins who presume to know the essence of the Vedas! Why not chant His divine Name, knowing that it is the one thing required for the welfare of all men. As for myself, I shall seek for the knowledge of

Thy true nature by taking Thy Name and observing the other disciplines of the path of devotion.[44]

विष्णोः कर्माणि सम्पश्यत मनसि सदा यैः स धर्मानबध्ना-

द्यानीन्द्रस्यैष भृत्यः प्रियसख इव च व्यातनोत् क्षेमकारी ।

वीक्षन्ते योगसिद्धाः परपदमनिशं यस्य सम्यक् प्रकाशं

विप्रेन्द्रा जागरूकाः कृतबहुनुतयो यच्च निर्भासयन्ते ॥ 4 ॥

4. Contemplate always on the deeds of Mahavishnu in His various Incarnations for the establishment of righteousness and spirituality, as also on his doings in His role; some times as the friend, sometimes as the servant of Indra, apparently to help Indra but really for the welfare of all. Direct your minds to Him whose Supreme State, the self-luminous light of Pure Consciousness, is always experienced by great mystics and seers, and whose greatness the saintly scholars try their best to expound through various hymns of praise.

नो जातो जायमानोऽपि च समधिगत-स्त्वन्महिम्नोऽवसानं

देव श्रेयांसि विद्वान् प्रतिमुहुरपि ते नाम शंसामि विष्णो ।

तं त्वां संस्तौमि नानाविध-नुतिवचनैरस्य लोकत्रयस्या-

प्यूर्ध्वं विभ्राजमाने विरचितवसतिं तत्र वैकुण्ठलोके ॥ 5 ॥

5. O Lord Vishnu! No one, either born till now or yet to be born, could possibly know Thy greatness in its fullness. What is possible at all to do—and that I am trying—is to chant Thy Name again and again, knowing that it promotes one's spiritual evolution. With numerous hymns of praise I am, therefore, invoking Thee, who residest in the glorious sphere of Vaikuntha that transcends all the worlds (of material Prakriti).

आपः सृष्टयादिजन्याः प्रथममयि विभो गर्भदेशे दधुस्त्वां

यत्र त्वय्येव जीवा जलशयन हरे सङ्गता ऐक्यमापन् ।

तस्याजस्य प्रभो ते विनिहितमभवत् पद्ममेकं हि नाभौ

दिक्पत्रं यत् किलाहुः कनकधरणिभृत्-कर्णिकं लोकरूपम् ॥ 6 ॥

6. O Lord! At the beginning of creation Thou didst remain seminal in the Causal Waters. O Hari! Thou Resident of Causal Waters! Thou didst then hold all the Jivas in temporary mergence in Thy being. O All-powerful One! Based in the navel of the Eternal Being that Thou art, rose the World-Lotus, with the quarters for its petals and the Golden Mountain (Mahameru) for its pericap.

हे लोका विष्णुरेतद्-भुवनमजनय-त्तन्न जानीथ यूयं
युष्माकं ह्यन्तरस्थं किमपि तदपरं विद्यते विष्णुरूपम् ।
नीहारप्रख्य-मायापरिवृत-मनसो मोहिता नामरूपैः
प्राणप्रीत्यैक-तृप्ताश्चरथ मखपरा हन्त नेच्छा मुकुन्दे ॥ 7 ॥

7. O Men! It is Vishnu who created this universe. You do not seem to know that. He resides also within you in another aspect (as the indwelling spirit). With minds clouded by the mist of Maya (consisting in false evaluation), infatuated with the world of names and forms, and deeming sense-satisfaction the sole meaning of life, you go about lost in Vedic rituals like sacrifices (that offer sensuous felicities here and in heaven hereafter as their reward). Alas! You have no longing for the Lord!

मूर्ध्नामक्ष्णां पदानां वहसि खलु सहस्राणि सम्पूर्य विश्वं
तत्प्रोत्क्रम्यापि तिष्ठन् परिमितविवरे भासि चित्तान्तरेऽपि ।
भूतं भव्यं च सर्वं परपुरुष भवान् किञ्च देहेन्द्रियादि-
ष्वाविष्टो-ह्युद्गतत्वा-दमृतसुखरसं चानुभुङ्क्षे त्वमेव ॥ 8 ॥

8. O Supreme Being! Possessed of countless heads, feet and eyes, Thou art manifested as the Virat Purusha (the Divine Person with the cosmos as the body). Though Thou dost infill the whole universe and also shinest (as the Light of Consciousness) within the limitation of the living principle in man, Thou art ever the Transcendent Being (whom no limitation can affect or exhaust). Thou art all that is included in the past, present and future. Further, it is verily Thou that hast entered the combination of body and the senses as the individual soul and (after undergoing the travails of Samsara) dost get released from them and enjoy the bliss of liberation.

यत्तु त्रैलोक्यरूपं दधदपि च ततो निर्गतानन्तशुद्ध-
ज्ञानात्मा वर्तसे त्वं तव खलु महिमा सोऽपि तावान् किमन्यत् ।
स्तोकस्ते भाग एवाखिलभुवनतया दृश्यते त्र्यंशकल्पं
भूयिष्ठं सान्द्रमोदात्मकमुपरि ततो भाति तस्मै नमस्ते ॥ 9 ॥

9. O Infinite Being! Though Thou hast assumed the form of the whole universe, wonder of wonders! Thy transcending greatness is such that Thy being is not involved in this cosmic manifestation and Thy nature as the Infinite Pure Spirit remains unaffected by it. An aspect of Thine, a fourth alone, is seen in this manifested world of Becoming, whilst Thou transcendest it by Thy other three parts as Bliss unalloyed[45]. To Thee my salutations!

अव्यक्तं ते स्वरूपं दुरधिगमतमं तत्तु शुद्धैकसत्त्वं
व्यक्तञ्चाप्येतदेव स्फुटममृतरसाम्भोधि-कल्लोलतुल्यम् ।
सर्वोत्कृष्टामभीष्टां तदिह गुणरसेनैव चित्तं हरन्तीं
मूर्तिं ते संश्रयेऽहं पवनपुरपते पाहि मां कृष्ण रोगात् ॥ 10 ॥

10. Thy nature as Absolute Being is not manifest to the senses or the intellect. It is therefore difficult to grasp or attain to. But Thy Being manifest in Suddhasattva (spiritual substance) as Krishna is like the wavy surface of the ocean of Blissful Spirit, definite, clear and easy to grasp[46]. Therefore I resort to the worship of this form of Thine which is superior to anything manifested, and which is lovable and enchanting by its sweet beauty and other blessed attributes. O Krishna! O Resident of Guruvayoor! Deign to free me from my ailments!

CANTO 100

THE BLESSED VISION

अग्रे पश्यामि तेजो निबिडतर-कलायावली-लोभनीयं
पीयूषाप्लावितोऽहं तदनु तदुदरे दिव्यकैशोरवेषम् ।
तारुण्यारम्भरम्यं परमसुखरसास्वाद-रोमाञ्चिताङ्गै-
रावीतं नारदाद्यै-र्विलसदुपनिष-त्सुन्दरीमण्डलैश्च ॥ 1 ॥

1. Before me I see a bluish Radiance excelling the charm of a thick array of Kalaya flowers. At its sight I feel the upsurge of Bliss like one bathed in nectar (both without and within). Next I see in the core of that Brilliance the form of a Divine Boy charming by the graces of budding youth. He is encircled by sages like Narada athrill with ecstatic bliss, and by a bevy of beauties who are none but the Upanishads embodied.

नीलाभं कुञ्चिताग्रं घनममलतरं संयतं चारुभङ्गया
रत्नोत्तंसाभिरामं वलयितमुदय-च्चन्द्रकैः पिञ्छजालैः ।
मन्दार-स्रङ्निवीतं तव पृथुकबरीभार-मालोकयेहं
स्निग्धश्वेतोर्ध्व-पुण्ड्रामपि च सुललितां फालबालेन्दुवीथीम् ॥ 2 ॥

2. I see Thy black, curly and luxuriant locks beautifully coiffured and bedecked with jewels and garlands of Mandara flowers, and ringed by a plume of peacock feathers glistening with multi-coloured eyes. I see also Thy broad and smooth forehead resembling the waxing moon and rendered handsome by the up-drawn white sandal-paste mark.

हृद्यं पूर्णानुकम्पार्णव-मृदुलहरी-चञ्चलद्भ्रूविलासै-
रानील-स्निग्धपक्ष्मावलि-परिलसितं नेत्रयुग्मं विभो ते ।
सान्द्रच्छायं विशालारुण-कमलदलाकार-मामुग्धतारं
कारुण्यालोकलीला-शिशिरितभुवनं क्षिप्यतां मय्यनाथे ॥ 3 ॥

3. Deign to cast on me, who is forlorn and forsaken, Thy pair of eyes, which are attractive with brows that are

tremulous like gentle waves in the ocean of mercy; which are rendered beautiful by the rows of blue and soft lashes on their lids; which are lustrous and charming with their attractive pupils; which are large, red and shaped like lotus petals; and which cool the worlds with the merciful glances dancing therein.

उत्तुङ्गोल्लासिनासं हरिमणिमुकुर-प्रोल्लसद्-गण्डपाली-
व्यालोल-त्कर्णपाशाञ्चित-मकरमणीकुण्डल-द्वन्द्वदीप्रम् ।
उन्मीलद्दन्तपङ्क्ति-स्फुरदरुणतरच्छाय-बिम्बाधरान्तः-
प्रीतिप्रस्यन्दि-मन्दस्मितमधुरतरं वक्त्रमुद्भासतां मे ।। 4 ।।

4. May I, with all clarity, visualise Thy face, which is characterised by its prominent and handsome nose; which has cheeks shining like mirrors of emerald, reflecting the light of the fish-marked ornaments that adorn Thy ears; and which is soothing with the flow of a benign smile that proceeds from Thy red ruby-like lips revealing the shining rows of teeth behind.

बाहुद्वन्द्वेन रत्नोज्वलवलयभृता शोणपाणिप्रवाले-
नोपात्तां वेणुनालीं प्रसृत-नखमयूखाङ्गुली-सङ्गसाराम् ।
कृत्वा वक्त्रारविन्दे सुमधुरविकस-द्रागमुद्भाव्यमानैः
शब्दब्रह्मामृतैस्त्वं शिशिरितभुवनैः सिञ्च मे कर्णवीथीम् ।। 5 ।।

5. Soak, soak my ears with the ambrosial flow of Thy music, which is the veritable Brahman embodied as sound, and which cools all the worlds with its sweet and expanding notes as they proceed out of the flute applied to Thy lotus-like lips with Thy bejewelled hands of coral redness, and shining in the varied colours produced by the contact of Thy gleaming finger nails.

उत्सर्पत्कौस्तुभश्री-ततिभिररुणितं कोमलं कण्ठदेशं
वक्षः श्रीवत्सरम्यं तरलतरसमुद्दीप्र-हारप्रतानम् ।
नानावर्णप्रसूनावलि-किसलयिनीं वन्यमालां विलोल-
ल्लोलम्बां लम्बमानामुरसि तव तथा भावये रत्नमालाम् ।। 3 ।।

6. I meditate on Thy handsome neck red with the spreading lustre of Thy Kaustubha jewel; on Thy chest beautified by the Srivatsa mark and by the tremulous and brilliant necklaces of pearls and gems; and on the thick wreath made of flowers and tender sprouts of varied colours spreading over Thy chest and hovered over by bees in quest of honey.

अङ्गे पञ्चाङ्गरागै-रतिशयविकस-त्सौरभाकृष्टलोकं
लीनानेक-त्रिलोकी-विततिमपि कृशां बिभ्रतं मध्यवल्लीम् ।
शक्राश्मन्यस्त-तप्तोज्वल-कनकनिभं पीतचेलं दधानं
ध्यायामो दीप्तरश्मि-स्फुटमणिरशना-किङ्किणीमण्डितं त्वाम् ॥ 7 ॥

7. We meditate on Thee who dost attract the whole world by the far-spreading and elevating fragrance of Thy unguents of five ingredients; whose abdominal region, though holding all the worlds within, is none-the-less slender and handsome like a creeper; who wears an yellow cloth brilliant like a sheet of molten gold that shines against the background of a sapphire rock of bluish hue; and whose waist band is set with luminous gems and gleaming mini-bells.

ऊरू चारू तवोरू घनमसृणरुचौ चित्तचोरौ रमाया
विश्वक्षोभं विशङ्कच ध्रुवमनिशमुभौ पीतचेलावृताङ्गौ ।
आनम्राणां पुरस्तान्न्यसनधृत-समस्तार्थपाली-समुद्ग-
च्छायं जानुद्वयञ्च क्रमपृथुलमनोज्ञे च जङ्घे निषेवे ॥ 8 ॥

8. I further meditate on Thy handsome thighs, stout, solid and soft, which steal the heart of Thy consort Rema and which are always covered with yellow wearing-cloth lest they should fill the whole world with excitement; on Thy knees which resemble two caskets preserving the supreme gifts of life for distribution among humble votaries prostrating at Thy feet; and on Thy foreleg, delightful with its calf muscles that are thick and tapering downward.

मञ्जीरं मञ्जुनादैरिव पदभजनं श्रेय इत्यालपन्तं
पादाग्रं भ्रान्तिमज्ज-त्प्रणतजनमनो-मन्दरोद्धारकूर्मम् ।

उत्तुङ्गाताम्रराज-न्नखरहिमकर-ज्योत्स्नया चाऽश्रितानां
सन्तापध्वान्तहन्त्रीं ततिमनुकलये मङ्गलामङ्गुलीनाम् ॥ 9 ॥

9. I meditate on Thy anklets which sweetly murmur, as it were, the excellence of worshipping Thy feet; on Thy arching feet which support and sustain the mind of man sinking in the sea of ignorance, just as thou didst, in Thy Incarnation as the Divine Tortoise, with the Mandara mountain when it was sinking in the milk ocean during the churning of it for ambrosia; and on Thy row of auspicious toes with their crimson moon-shaped nails whose soft brilliance scatters the darkness of suffering from the minds of votaries.

योगीन्द्राणां त्वदङ्गेष्वधिकसुमधुरं मुक्तिभाजां निवासो
भक्तानां कामवर्ष-द्यु तरुकिसलयं नाथ ते पादमूलम् ।
नित्यं चित्तस्थितं मे पवनपुरपते कृष्ण कारुण्यसिन्धो
हृत्वा निश्शेषतापान् प्रदिशतु परमानन्दसन्दोहलक्ष्मीम् ॥ 10 ॥

10. O Lord! Thy feet are the most beloved of all Thy parts to the great Yogins. They form the abode for emancipated ones. For the devotees they are like the celestial tree which yields them all their wants. O Krishna! O Lord of Guruvayoor! O Ocean of Mercy! May those feet of Thine ever rest in my heart, destroy all my sufferings and bestow on me the treasure of Supreme Bliss!

अज्ञात्वा ते महत्वं यदिह निगदितं विश्वनाथ क्षमेथाः
स्तोत्रञ्चैत-त्सहस्रोत्तरमधिकतरं त्वत्प्रसादाय भूयात् ।
द्वेधा नारायणीयं श्रुतिषु च जनुषा स्तुत्यतावर्णनेन
स्फीतं लीलावतारैरिदमिह कुरुता-मायुरारोग्यसौख्यम् ॥ 11 ॥

11. O Lord of all the Worlds! Deign to pardon me for what I have described here with so little knowledge of Thy greatness! May this hymn consisting of more than a thousand verses be the cause of securing Thy abounding grace! Deserving this name of Narayaneeyam in two ways—for the reasons that the subject matter dealt with is the glory of Sriman Narayana, the Supreme Being, and that the author too bears

the name Narayana—may this hymn which, following the Vedic revelation, describes Thy creative activity, Thy blessed attributes, and Thy sportive Incarnations, vouchsafe longevity, health and happines[47] (Immortality, Enlightenment and Bliss)!

॥ श्री कृष्णार्पणमस्तु ॥

May this be an offering in dedication to Sri Krishna !

NOTES

[In the references given below in brackets, 'c' stands for canto, and 'v' for verse.]

1. (c.1, v.1) In this and the succeeding verses, the principle behind the worship of the Divine image is stated. First the Supreme Being or Brahman is described by the various epithets listed in the verse. The description would suggest that Brahman is the Impersonal Absolute who is not capable of being loved and worshipped, but this idea is rectified by the implication, made explicit in succeeding verses, that He is simultaneously Personal also. This Divine Person is identified with Mahavishnu who has incarnated with all His powers and attributes as Krishna (Purnavatara), and this very Krishna is conceived as manifest in His image at the temple of Guruvayoor. So these three stages of identification have to be kept in mind to understand the devotional sentiment expressed in this hymn. According to Vaishnava theology, the Archa Vigraha (the Divine image for worship) is an Incarnation or Descent of the Deity out of His abundant mercy for man, so that He might be accessible to every one endowed with faith, for worship and communion. So in the whole of the *Narayaneeyam* the image is addressed as the Divine Person identified with Sri Krishna. Great saints and seers have actually experienced the presence of the Divine in images. Sri Ramkrishna's life is a witness to this truth in modern times. In the *Narayaneeyam* itself the poet-devotee describes in the last canto in lyrical language how he did actually behold the living spiritual presence of Krishna in the image.

2. (c.1, v.3) The Form of the Divine Person (Bhagavan) as also his Abode, its denizens and all the paraphernalia of it is said to be constituted of Suddhasattva (pure Sattva or spiritual substance) according to Vaishnava theology. The word is used in contrast with material Sattva, which along with Rajas and Tamas, forms the three constituents or Gunas of Prakriti (Nature). Sattva in Nature, being always in combination with Rajas and Tamas, is spoken of as Asuddha (impure). In contrast to this, Suddha-sattva is called Aprakrita—meaning that it is pure spiritual substance beyond Nature and without any taint of grossnesss from mixture with Rajas and Tamas. In some schools of Vaishnavism it is conceived as an expression of the Swarupa-Shakti (innermost spiritual Nature) of Iswara in contrast with His Bahiranga (extraneous) Shakti, which is Nature (Prakriti) constituted of the three Gunas. Suddha-sattva is not gross or limited by space and time like material entities; it is self-luminous, of the nature of intelligence and bliss, capable of taking any form at will, unsurpassed in splendour, and wonderful

because of its ever-renewing novelty and grandeur. The Divine form is constituted of this spiritual substance. The form of Suddha-sattva is not a limiting adjunct of the Spirit, but identical with the Spirit, and is therefore said to reveal the Spirit unobstructed to the purified vision of devotees. This is stated in the 3rd and 5th verses.

3. (c.1, v.4) Sri Krishna is described in the Bhagavata as the Purnavatara or complete manifestation of the Bhagavan, while other incarnations are called partial. 'Bhagavan' is the special term in Vaishnava theology to indicate the Divine Person, and it means the One possessed of the six Divine majesties listed as Aiswarya (Omnipotence), Virya (powers), Yasas (fame), Sri (beauty-cum-auspiciousness), Jnana (omniscience), Vairagya (renunciation) (c.1, v.10). In Sri Krishna all these majesties are fully present, and so He is called Bhagavan Swayam (the Lord Himself, as distinguished from partial Incarnations). Unless the doctrine implied in this verse is understood and fully accepted, the Bhagavata and its condensation, the *Narayaneeyam*, will lose all their high devotional significance. This point is treated in detail in the Introduction. Next, after equating Krishna with the Supreme Divine Person, the relationship between Him and the philosophical Absolute (Nishkala or Partless Whole) is explained by the analogy of the wavy surface of the ocean and the ocean as a whole. The wavy surface is an inseparable feature of the ocean and is therefore the ocean itself. We must either not make a distinction between them, or if for purposes of thought we do make a distinction, that distinction is one without a difference. God or the Divine Person is identical with the Absolute. God is the highest being in devotional thought, and He must therefore be the Absolute also, even as the wavy surface of the ocean and the ocean itself are one and the same in spite of the distinction. This is the doctrine of the Bheda-abheda philosophy (identity-in-difference) and all devotional doctrines accepting the unity of all existence are based on some variation or other of this doctrine. To depict God as a lesser and sublatable being, and the Absolute as a higher being, is to cut at the root of devotional thought by reducing God, the object of devotion and worship, into a mere idol at the best or a fictitious entity at the worst. As has been pointed out in the Introduction, the author of the *Narayaneeyam* is wavering between these two philosophical positions of the Bhedabheda form of Advaita and the Kevala form of it. Here he seems to expound the Bhedabheda position and plead for the absolute validity of the formful and personal aspect of the Divine, while accepting simultaneously, His formless and absolute status also.

4. (c.2, v.5) Prosperity and wealth are subject to constant fluctuations. A wealthy man of today can become a pauper tomorrow. Goddess Sri, who is the deity presiding over these conditions of life, has therefore earned the bad name of being a

fickle deity. But the poet shows that this is not a vice with the goddess but a virtue; for it is her attachment to her consort Mahavishnu and her consequent desire to be always with Him that prevent her from staying with those who are her exclusive votaries i.e., those who long only for riches and prosperity. The poet humorously adduces a further proof for the virtuous nature of Sri. She stays constantly, it is pointed out, with persons whose devotion for Mahavishnu is deep-rooted and steady; for in their company she could constantly listen to their prayers and hymns in glorification of Sri Hari and His excellences.

5. (c.4, v.10) The stages of spiritual evolution of a Jiva who attains to Samadhi are described. If he is without any trace of desire, his subtle body (Linga-sarira), which is the medium of all transmigrations, is also abandoned at the time of physical death, and the Jiva is dissolved in Brahman. This is called immediate liberation or Sadyo-mukti. If he has some trace of desire for power or higher spiritual felicities, he passes through stages of gradual spiritual evolution (called Karma-mukti in Vedanta). His Linga-sarira passes along the Path of Light (Archiradi-marga) through various spheres of glory to Maharloka and lives there with other spiritually perfect beings. When Naimittika–pralaya or partial dissolution takes place, he goes along with other Siddhas to Satyaloka of the creator Brahma. When Prakrita-pralaya or total dissolution takes place, he along with Brahma attains to oneness with Brahman. For the explanation of the different Pralayas reference may be made to Note 6.

6. (c.5, v.1) The subject of creation (which consists of both Srishti or primary creation and Visrishti or secondary creation, referred together generally by the former term) is described in this and succeeding cantos upto the 10th. Srishti (creation) and Pralaya (dissolution or involution) go together as the two successive aspects of the creative process, which is of the nature of an eternally recurring cyclic movement in contrast to the linear conception which posits a beginning and an ultimate end. One full cycle of the creative process, consisting of a period of Srishti and Pralaya, lasts for four Parardhas, a period of time explained hereafter. At the close of a Pralaya, which is of two Parardha duration, and the beginning of the new cycle, Mahavishnu, who has been in his Cosmic Slumber during Pralaya, is roused up by Time. By His will, known in Puranas as Ikshana-kriya (the process of ' looking at '), Prakriti or Nature is stimulated to activity from its state of latency in Him during Pralaya. In the state of Pralaya the whole of the manifested universe dissolves into its constituent material elements, these into psychological efficiencies, and these again into the Cosmic Mind, and that into Prakriti constituted of the three Gunas of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, and Prakriti with all Jivas involved in it into a state of quiescence and absorption in the Supreme Being. This reverse process of involution ending with the total absorption of Nature or

Prakriti into a potential condition in the Supreme Being along with Brahma presiding over the creative cycle, is called Prakrita-pralaya or Brahma-pralaya. At the end of this Pralaya lasting for two Parardhas, Prakriti, being stimulated into activity by the Divine will, is projected or thrust into manifested condition by stages until it has expresssed itself as the twenty four categories ending with gross matter (as explained in Note 7). These categories, left to themselves, are not able to combine and evolve the world systems and the bodies for Jivas. So Mahavishnu interpenetrates them and endows them with the necessary efficiency. The whole of Nature in its rudimentary manifested condition then combines into what is called Hiranya-garbha, translated as Golden Egg or Cosmic Whole, which is identical with the Lotus-born Brahma of four faces. It is symbolised as a lotus bud coming out of the navel of Mahavishnu lying on His serpent-bed in Cosmic Slumber with Brahma seated in it. With the emergence of Brahma, the next phase of creation called Visrishti or secondary creation begins. He forms the Lotus (which stands for the totality of nature) into the fourteen spheres described in canto 6, verses 1 to 3 as the Cosmic Body of the Lord, and also the bodies for various species of beings inhabiting them according to the Karma potency acquired by these Jivas in earlier creative cycles. Brahma's creative work, consisting in the combination of the categories of Nature, Karma, and the Jivas at his disposal, is called Visrishti or secondary creation in contrast to the earlier stage of Srishti or projection of the categories.

Brahma's creative activity lasts for two Parardhas. It is his total life span. At the end of it, he with all evolutes of Prakriti and their combinations dissolves in the reverse order from grossness to subtleness until the whole manifested Prakriti is again absorbed in Mahavishnu in Cosmic Slumber for another two Parardhas. This is called Brahma-pralaya or Prakrita-Pralaya, a kind of total dissolution characterised by the end of Brahma's life. A new Brahma comes into being at the dawn of the new cycle at the close of two Parardhas of Pralaya. This process repeats itself eternally in cyclic order.

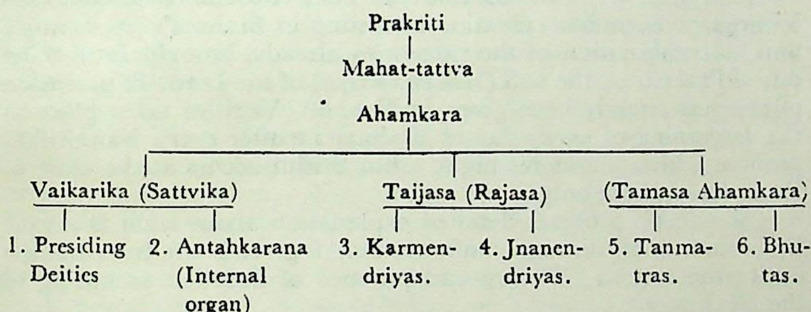
In contrast to Prakrita-Pralaya, there is also what is called Naimittika or intermediary Pralaya at the end of a Brahma's day and the begining of his night (cf. canto 8, verse 2 to 7). Then there is a partial dissolution of the universe while Brahmas is asleep and the entire creative process is at a standstill. All the worlds upto Satyaloka are dissolved. On his awakening, Brahma's creative activity is again revived. His day and night are of equal duration. He continues in this way for his life-span of 100 divine years, each year consisting of 360 Brahmic days. Then Prakrita-Pralaya takes place, bringing into being a new Brahma at its close.

Time, in relation to Brahma's life, is computed as follows according to the Puranas: 360 human years=1 year of the gods. 12,000 years of the gods=1 Chaturyuga (or period comprising the

four ages of Krita, Treta, Dvapara and Kali which will come to 43,20,000 human years). 2000 Chaturyugas=1 day of Brahma the creator. 360 such days of Brahma= 1 year of Brahma. 50 years of Brahma= 1 Parardha. 2 Parardhas =life span of Brahma, which is equal to 31104,000,00,00,000 or 311040 billion human years. After that, Pralaya equal to the duration of two Parardhas, takes place and at its end a new cycle of creation starts with a new Brahma at its head. The time required for a cycle of Sristhti and Pralaya comprising four Parardhas, is equated with one winking of Mahavishnu.

7. (c.5, v.4) In this and succeeding four verses Srishti (primary creation) consisting in the projection of the categories is given. The data are given below, tabulated for easy reference.

The evolutes of Prakriti, including the twenty four categories, as stated in this and subsequent three verses, are shown below:



1. Presiding Deities: These are fourteen—Dik, Vayu, Aditya, Varuna, and Aswins, controlling the five Jnanendriyas (organs of knowledge); Agni, Indra, Vishnu, Mitra, and Prajapati controlling the five Karmendriyas (organs of action); and Chandra, Brahma, Rudra and Kshetrajna presiding over the four aspects of Antahkarana (inner organ or mind).

2. Antahkarana: This is what is ordinarily called mind, but is termed 'inner organ' to show that it includes several aspects and stands in contrast to the outer organs to be described separately. Its four aspects are: mind, intellect, egoity, and mind-stuff (Chitta). Each of the last mentioned four deities presides over each of these aspects. The above two items (1 & 2) are the products of Sattvika-ahamkara.

3. Karmendriyas: These are the organs of action and are five in number, speech, hands, feet, excretory organs and the generative organ. The five deities controlling these are mentioned under item 1 above.

4. Jnanendriyas: These are the five organs of knowledge. They are: ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. The deities controlling these are mentioned above in item 1.

The above two items (3 & 4) are the products of Rajasa-ahamkara.

5 & 6 Tanmatras & Bhutas: The Tanmatras are the subtle essences and the Bhutas the gross elements. They are causally related. The details under these two items are stated below in the order of their origination. Out of Tamasa-ahamkara emerges Tanmatra sound and from it Bhuta sky; from Bhuta Sky, Tanmatra Touch; from Tanmatra Touch, Bhuta Air; from Bhuta Air, Tanmatra Rupa; from Tanmatra Rupa, Bhuta Tejas; from Bhuta Tejas, Tanmatra Taste; from Tanmatra Taste, Bhuta water; and from Bhuta water, Tanmatra smell; and from Tanmatra smell, Bhuta Earth. Each Tanmatra, which is also a form of sensation, transmits that particular form of sensation to the Bhuta coming out of it, and each Bhuta to the Tanmatra springing from it, the succeeding category thereby inheriting all the properties of the earlier ones.

8. (c.8, v.1) In this and the next two cantos is described Visarga or Secondary creation consisting in Brahma's appearance and his combination of the categories already brought into being out of Prakriti by the will (Ikshana-kriya) of the Lord. Explanation of this has already been given in Note 6. Visrishti takes place at the beginning of every day of Brahma i.e after every Naimittika-pralaya which marks his night. But Srishti occurs at the close of Prakrita- pralaya only.

9. (c.11, v.6) A detailed explanation about what is meant by 'communion through confrontation,' is given in the Introduction under the section 'Theory and practice of devotion according to the *Bhagavata*'.

10. (c.15, v.2) Reference may be made to Note 7 on the evolution of the categories enumerated very briefly in this verse.

11. (c.15, v.8) In Note 5 on c.4, v.10, the subjects of immediate salvation (Sadyomukti) at death and of evolutionary salvation (Krama-mukti) have been described. The path of evolutionary salvation is what is here described as the Northern Path, which is also called Archiradi Marga or Path of Light. The pious householders who do dedicated action and practise devotion, those of them who practise Panchagni Vidya, and those who are life-long Brahmacharins go along this path. In addition to the progress of these evolutionary souls, reference is made here to the fate of Jivas that are in a stalemate, or continual involvement in cycles of birth and death. The fate of those leading a wicked life is described first in the sixth and seventh verses. They suffer for their sins in hells and come to the earth again for another opportunity to tread the path of virtue and devotion. In contrast to all the above there are the others who do religious and philanthropic works for the fruits accruing from them. They are here described as going after death, along the Southern Path, known also as Pitriyana (the Path of the Pitris or the Manes) and as Dhumadi-marga (Path of Smoke). They pass through regions

controlled by deities of smoke, night, dark half of the fortnight, Dakshinayana etc. and reach the world of the Manes (Pitris), otherwise known as the lunar sphere. There they get heavenly enjoyments as the reward for their works, but return to this earth when the effects of their good works are exhausted.

12. (c.16, v.8) The *Narayaneeyam*, in almost equating Nara-Narayana in greatness with Krishna who is described generally as the perfect Avatara (Purnavatara), is according them a place of eminence, of which devotional circles are not usually aware. Complete detachment (Vairagya), which is the most important of the Bhagas (six divine majesties), is manifest in Nara-Narayana, as exemplified by their unperturbed condition of mind even when attended on by numbers of unrivalled beauties. So was Krishna, who is described in the Pauranika idiom as a perfect Brahmacharin, even though he had sixteen hundred and eight wives and an equal number of lady loves. In unaffectedness by Prakriti and its transformations, lies the uniqueness of the Spirit, and the spiritual worth of a person is to be assessed by the reflection of this great divines trait (Vairagya) in his life.

13 (c. 22 v. 9) In this episode of Ajamila the sanctifying effect of the Divine Name in *itself*, without any consideration of the devotee's subjective attitude or understanding, is stated in an uncompromising form. The *Bhagavata*, the original text on which the *Narayaneeyam* is based, says as follows in this context: " If a man cries out in a mood of helplessness ' O Hari! '—let this be done when falling from a height, or when slipping down, or when being cut up, or when bitten or burnt or belaboured—he does not deserve the punishment of hell." The Names of the Lord, be they uttered with or without knowledge of their power and holiness, destroy the sins of man, as fire consumes fuel. A potent drug, even when used casually without any awarness of its powers, manifests its inherent curative property. Even so does the utterance of a Mantra (Name of the Lord). (Bh. 6.2. 8-12)

The object here is not to encourage a man to sin, with the assurance that it can be easily expiated afterwards. To entertain such a light attitude towards the Divine Name is called Namaparadha (offence against the Name) and is considered the most sinful of all sins. The idea, on the other hand, is to establish the truth that God's Name is an Incarnation of Himself in the sound form, and has an inherent power, which is not dependent on the devotee's faith, attitude or understanding. It works on one uttering it, just as a medicine works on one taking it, out of its inherent potency, irrespective of the patient's attitude or understanding about it. This is an important doctrine of the Bhakti school. It is worked out more elaborately in connection with the Divine Incarnation as Sri Krishna. In Him the Divine is incarnated, not as ' sound ' or anything intangible, but as an embodied being, and every one fixing his mind intensely through

various forms of personal relationship, be it through the impulsion of enmity, lust, comradeship, adoration, or philosophic contemplation, is alike sanctified by Krishna. The subject is treated in detail in the section on the Bhagavata in the Introduction. The point here to be remembered is that the Bhakti doctrine recognises the objective sanctity of the Divine Name as of the Divine Incarnation, the former being a manifestation as sound vibration and the latter as an embodied form.

14. (c.35, v.10) The treatment of Rama's Incarnation in the *Narayaneeyam* is too brief and perfunctory, and not commensurate with the great impact it has had on the devotional life of the country. But this is done only following the footsteps of the *Bhagavata*, on which the *Narayaneeyam* is based. The *Bhagavata* is meant to highlight the Sri Krishna Incarnation, and all the earlier narratives are only a preparation for the appearance of this Purnavatara or perfect manifestation of Divinity.

Also Bhattatiri's estimate of Rama Incarnation, that it is to show men how " intense affection (Kama) will lead us to pangs of separation (as Rama suffered from his loss of Sita) and how extreme addiction to Dharma, the letter of the law, will push one to Adharma." This is an echo of the Bhagavata verse 5.19.5–6. Many a devotee of Rama will not agree with this, although it may be conveying a subtle point that would interest a critical student. Rama and Krishna are two major Incarnations, the former being glorified in the Ramayana and the latter in the Bhagavata. Both have been equally important factors in the devotional life of India. Rama Incarnation depicts a model of manhood and human conduct which people are asked to follow, whereas Krishna is a Divine manifestation whose words are to be followed but not deeds. In some Vaishnava sects, Rama is therefore described as Maryada-purushottama (Divinity who has restricted Himself by laws) and Krishna as Pushti-purushottama (Divinity that bestows grace in ways that are not bound by laws and social norms).

15. (c.36, v.11) The Parasurama Incarnation is given unusual improtance in the text. Parasurama's part in recovering the land of Kerala from the sea is unknown to the Bhagavata, although there may be some other Sanskrit texts to support the point. Bhattatiri, as a Kerala Brahmana (Nampudiri), shows here his special allegiance to Parasurama, who is the patron saint of Nampudiris.

16. (c.59, v.10) In this one short verse the special theory of Bhakti adumbrated in the *Bhagavata* is cryptically expressed. For an elaborate exposition of it, the reader is referred to the section in the Introduction on ' The Theory and Practice of Devotion in the Bhagavata '. In brief the theory in this: Krishna being the Bhagavan Himself, the mind of man fixed on him intensely, whatever be the motive and however ignorantly it might be, would get enlightened and transformed by the sanctifying influence of the

Lord on that mind. This is compared to the curative effect of a medicine on a man who takes it either knowingly or unknowingly. Here in the case of the Gopikas sex-passion, the most powerful of instincts and the cause of all worldly entanglements, gets directed to Krishna; and Krishna being the object of their passion, that passion itself becomes for them a sure and certain means of spiritual uplift. Unlike them, an ordinary aspirant strives for enlightenment through spiritual practices, which are not natural to him but have to be laboriously cultivated. Inspite of all one's effort, success in them is uncertain. The good fortune of the Gopikas is therefore praised.

The progress of the love of the Gopikas is described in succeeding cantos. Some maintain that there is nothing physical in the Gopi-Krishna episode. This might be true with some of them, as it is found in canto 65 verse 7 that some of those who could not go to meet Krishna physically, abandoned their bodies in meditation and entered into His spiritual being. This abandonment of physical consciousness is also the implied meaning of the episode of the stealing of the robes of the Gopis described in canto 60. But the descriptions show that for the vast majority of them it was a physical attraction to start with, yet it culminated in a spiritual consummation owing to the holy influence of Krishna on their mind when it got passionately concentrated on Him. This gradual transformation is brought about through union alternated with separation. The first phase of it is seen when Krishna separates from the Gopikas in the course of Rasalila when they are overcome with pride and egotism (see canto 67). The next phase is when Krishna goes away to Mathura and the Gopikas are taught by the message sent through Uddhava (canto 76) the lesson that through separation alone will their devotion be strengthened and ultimately take the shape of Brahmananda (bliss of Brahman), attaining which both union and separation would be blissful alike. Again when Krishna's final meeting with the Gopikas at Syamanta-panchaka is described in canto 84, we find that the purificatory fire of separation and the instruction through Uddhava have taken effect on them, and they are ready to receive the final blessing of Krishna by which they realise that He is ever present within them as the essence of Consciousness-Bliss, whether it be in union or separation.

The question may be raised, whether all the realistic descriptions of this given here and in the *Bhagavata* as of a passionate love episode are factual and also whether they are needed in a scripture like the *Bhagavata*. No doubt poetic imagination has much to do with these descriptions and details. But it has also to be admitted that if only a bald statement is made of the philosophical principles involved or a philosophical essay written on the theme, no impression will be made on the mind of man. It is because of the romantic element involved that men of all tastes and tempera-

ments have been drawn to the adoration of Krishna as the beloved of the Gopikas. It is stated in the *Bhagavata* that the Divine Incarnate performs such Leelas (sportive activities) in His embodiment, so that devotees may feel attracted and also find material galore to contemplate upon and foster their devotional life. It is also to be remembered that Krishna, as stated in the Gita, approaches a votary according to the votary's conception and approach towards Him. So we find that He blessed persons like Hiranyakasipu, Kamsa etc., who adopted the way of 'communion through confrontation', by receiving them with weapons in the battlefield. So also the Gopikas, who focused their mind on Him as a lover, were received by Him in the manner of an earthly lover, but in the process were purified and raised to the level of Brahman realisation. And as far as Krishna Himself is concerned, He is moved neither by enmity nor by sex-attraction in any of these happenings. He is egoless, and remains ever the unperturbed Bliss-Consciousness that stoops, by an aspect of His, as it were, to bless a devotee according to his Bhava (spiritual mood) and lift him up to His spiritual essence.

17. (c.60, v.7) Krishna snatching away the robes of the bathing Gopikas and asking them to come up from the water and stand with arms uplifted to receive their robes from him sitting atop a tree, is the theme of this canto. After reading the canto a critic may see in it nothing but the unabashed act of an eve-teaser. But contrary to this estimate, the *Narayaneeyam* finds in it the measure of the purity of the Gopikas. This can be understood only when it is realised that this incident gives symbolic expression to a great truth of the spiritual realm. The *Bhagavata* describes itself at the start as a text that delineates the Dharma of the Paramahamsas, that is, of those who have thrown away all false values and ignoble passions of the heart. It is this idea that is expounded herein, cloth representing symbolically all those false values which stand as a separating screen between the Jiva and the Lord, making Him a stranger to the Jiva. In the life of Sri Ramakrishna, a true Paramahamsa of our age, we find that when he started meditation on the Divine in his early days, he was observed to throw away his clothes and Yagnopavita, and sit naked in a solitary place meditating. When he was asked for an explanation, he said: "I do so because, thus freed from all ties, one should call on the Lord. From his birth man labours under the 'eight bondages' of hatred, fear, shame, aversion, egoism, vanity, pride of noble birth and obsession with the formalities of good conduct. When one calls on the Mother, one should discard these 'bondages' and call on Her with a concentrated mind. This is why I put off all these." One who has discarded all these bondages is called in the spiritual terminology of India, an Avadhuta, or 'one who has shaken off all bondages of false values." An Avadhuta is therefore supposed to go about without any clothing, clothing symbolising these bondages.

The Gopikas are the Jivas that have become Avadhutas, who have shaken off all the eight bondages mentioned before, and have become fit to receive the Lord as their ' own '. This episode is therefore put as a prelude to Rasalila, which is an artistic and symbolic description of the consummation of the spiritual striving for the attainment of the Lord. This is, however, not to deny the factuality of the incidents of Krishna's life, but only to show that it should be studied in the proper perspective.

18. (c.64, v.10) The author has rightly pointed out that the real miracle, and therefore the really distinctive feature of a Divine Incarnation, is the bestowal of grace on devotees and elevation of their consciousness to the highest pinnacle of spiritual experience by an act of His Will. It is from this point of view that the life of Sri Ramakrishna, who is acclaimed as the Incarnation of the age, becomes specially significant. We do not find in his life any thundering miracle like the lifting of Govardhana mountain and such other feats described in the accounts of Incarnations in the Puranas, but it is replete with instances of his ' bestowing spiritual illumination on men as if it were a gift in one's hand '.

19. (c.68, v.10) Note 16 on verse 10 of canto 59 is relevant here also. Why the idea of Jara, an illicit lover, is introduced here is explained in foot-note on pp. XXVIII of the Introduction.

20. (c.66, v.2) Reference may be made to pp. XXVI of the Introduction. In this context Krishna is depicted in the *Bhagavata* as giving an elaborate discourse to the Gopikas on the duty of good women and urging them to go home. In reply to him the Gopikas say: " Do not speak to us in this heartless way. We have come to Thy feet, abandoning every object of love and attraction in this world. Accept us, as Thou, the Supreme Being, dost with regard to all such all-renouncing devotees taking refuge in Thee. May what Thou, the knower of all rules of right conduct, dost speak of as the duty of women, namely that it consists in the service of their husbands, children and relatives, become quite true. Only let that sense of duty be directed towards Thee, who art the Soul of our souls and the only real relative and dear one of all beings. When a truly discerning one has bestowed one's heart on Thee, the Soul of all souls, of what use are the relative loves and attachments of this world, which ultimately prove to be sources of misery only. Deign therefore to desist from obstructing our long-established attachment to Thee. When the mind, hands and feet that are normally engaged in household duties, have been totally appropriated by Thee, how can we move away even a step from Thee, not to speak of going back all the way to our homes in the cowherd settlement. If Thou dost fail to quench, by the stream of Thy grace, the fire of love that has been kindled in our hearts by Thyself, we shall attain to Thee immediately through meditation, after burning these physical bodies of ours in that very fire of love augmented by the sense of separation. For, having once touched Thy dear

and holy feet, how can we think any more of any one else as our near and dear one? May Thou, therefore, be gracious unto us who have abandoned home and all that it means to persons like us, and come seeking shelter at Thy feet, goaded by the intense longing that our hearts have been seized with for Thee . . . . . ." (10. 29. 31-41). Sri Krishna's discourse on the ideals of good conduct and morality from the point of view of worldly relationships and the Gopikas' answer as to how the hunger of the soul over-rides all these firmly established rules are crypitically restated in 11.5.41 of the *Bhagavata* as follows: " He who has taken shelter with his entire being at the feet of the Lord who is the one shelter for all, — he is no longer a debtor and no longer a slave to any one, be it Devas, Rishis, relatives, fellow human beings or sub-human creatures. "

21. (c.66, v.9) Apart from the literary beauty of the conceit involved in the use of the term " Angaramaya," a great turth of the philosophy of spiritual love is brought out by implication through the use of this term. By saying that Krishna is ' like a burning piece of firewood in union and separation alike,' the state of Mahabhava, the highest experience of spiritual love, is described. Mahabhava in its perfect maturity (Adhirudha) is a state in which the thrill of union and the torture of separation co-exist, each one contributing to the other and mingling as a common sentiment. Some texts of the Chaitanya School of Vaishnavism describe it as " that stage of bliss and pain arising respectively from union with and separation from Krishna, in which all the happiness existing in crores of universes and all the pain produced by the bite of all the snakes and the stings of all the scorpions are felt as but a drop in an ocean. " How the Gopikas passed through these alternations of union and separation and got finally stabilised in their sentiment of Divine love when they parted from Krishna for the last time at Syamantapanchaka (c.84, v.7 & 8) is described in Note 16.

22. (c.67, v.3) It is to be noted that in the *Bhagavata* no particular Gopika by name Radha is mentioned. When Krishna disappeared from among the Gopikas, he did so in the company of one particular Gopika who was not overcome as yet by pride and egoism. Referring to her, the other Gopikas say, with a slight touch of envy, ' Being very devotedly adored by her (anaya-aradhitah), Krishna has gone with her in preference to us all ' (Bh. 10. 30. 28). Out of this expression ' aradhitah,' the name of that Gopika is interpreted through gramatical devices as Radha by the Bengal School of Vaishnavism, in whose theology she is a very essential entity. Theologically Radha is exalted into the Swarupa-Shakti (inherent power) of Krishna and a Transcendent Principle, whose expression in the Jiva is Bhakti. Radha at Vrindavana is only her manifestation to fulfil Krishna's mission of teaching divine love. In fact all the Gopikas are emanations of Radha. The *Bhagavata*

is said to have taken its present shape by about the 8th century. It is only in the Puranas that came still later in the 12th and 13th centuries like the *Brahmavivarta*, *Padma* etc. that Radha and her friends like Chandravali make their appearance. This is another instance of Bhattatiri deviating from the text of the *Bhagavata*, just as he has done in an earlier canto with regard to Parasurama reclaiming the coastal region called Kerala.

23. (c.75, v.9) That Kamsa, a mortal enemy of Krishna, gets Sayujya (salvation by mergence) through death at His hand, is an illustration of ' communion through confrontation,' a concept explained in the Introduction on pp. xxv. Just as the Gopikas who were attracted by the urge of the sex-instinct were beatified by the holy influence and power of Krishna, so also the enemies of Krishna whose minds were fixed on Him through fear, anger or hatred, also attained to the same goal. For whosoever, knowingly or unknowingly, fixes his mind wholeheartedly on Him gets spiritual emancipation, just as a man taking a medicine, knowingly or unknowingly, gets cured of his disease. Reference may be made also to verse 3 of canto 86.

24. (c.76, v.10) The reference here is to Mahabhava, the acme of Divine love in which union and separation mutually contribute to the plenitude of Bliss (see Notes 17 and 21).

25. (c.80, v.10) The question will come up in the mind of the reader why Akrura, a faithful servant and devotee of the Lord, should descend to such a low level as to get involved in these bloody feuds and mean intrigues. The poet's explanation is that it is to shake him out of the complacency and conceit of his own moral and spiritual excellence. It is not quite unoften that spiritual downfall takes place even in the lives of persons who have been living a very holy life. Close examination will reveal that these falls are always brought about by overweaning pride and self-opinionatedness. A devotee is one who always feels that everything of his, including his virtue and devotion, are due to the Lord's grace. When this is forgotten, and a person, however virtuous, talented and devotional, begins to talk of everything in terms of ' I,' he is heading for a fall. He can, of course, rise again through repentance and resignation.

26. (c.84, v.11) This is the final parting of the Gopikas from Krishna in a physical sense. It will be noted that they have been by this time completely transformed, and become capable of seeing the Lord's presence in all situations of life.

27. (c.88,v.12) The uniqueness of Krishna-Incarnation, the principles involved in His life and personality for which He has been described as *Bhagavan swayam* (Bhagavan Himself), are briefly and effectively stated here. Physical miracles in which Krishna-Incarnation abounds are all over-looked, and the power of His true role as an expression of redemptive love is highlighted.

28. (c.90, v.1) In this canto as also in the previous one and later in canto 97, the poet-devotee seeks to establish that his Ishta (Chosen Ideal) Mahavishnu is the Supreme Being and that Siva and other Deities are only His emanations. He marshals many arguments based on Puranas and Mantra-sastra for this, and finally to clinch his argument he quotes the authority of a non-sectarian philosopher like Sankaracharya, who accepted the superiority of Mahavishnu by writing a commentary on His Sahasra-nama (hymn of thousand names) in preference to Sahasra-nama of Siva or other Deities.

The most interesting part of the argument is the reply with which he forestalls the possible objection that Vyasa, who is traditionally accepted as the author of all the Puranas, depicts Vishnu as inferior to Siva in Skanda-purana and describes Siva as the Supreme Being. He contends that these arguments are only to be taken as Arthavadas (See c.90, v.10) or euologies with a contrary meaning (Viruddha-vada), that is, when Siva is praised, it is only to show indirectly the glory of Vishnu, whose aspect Siva is. These scriptures are meant for the votaries of Siva who have to obtain their salvation through faith in Siva. So their faith in Siva is to be strengthened and made unswerving, and for this His exaltation over all other Deities is necessary. In other words, the one redeeming power, whom Saivas worship as Siva, is really Vishnu only, and therefore all the praises bestowed on Siva through down-grading Vishnu, are really indirect praises of Mahavishnu.

This argument gives the clue to the real meaning of sectarian theologies that have come under the influence of Vedantic thought. The Vedanta philosophy maintains that the one Supreme Being approaches a votary in whatever form the votary conceives Him, and so every one of these forms can be called the Supreme Being Himself. For those who can appreciate this liberal position, every sectarian theology is alike. But many people cannot distinguish the metaphysical 'All-comprehending *One*' from the 'mathematical one,' which is only the one distinguished from every other. So they raise the slogan that there is no God but God (meaning their Deity), and look down upon all religionists other than theirs as worshipping a false God. Such exclusiveness is needed to strengthen faith at a certain stage of man's development; but if he is not acquainted with the broad Vedantic view, there is grave danger of faith degenerating into fanaticism. A faith, even though exclusive, is valid and healthy only to the extent it recognises the propriety and validity of another man's right to have his own faith, and it is doubtful whether this kind of healthy faith can be achieved without apprehending the Vedantic idea of Spiritual Truth as the 'All-comprehending One' in contrast to the mathematical truth as the 'exclusive one'. The final argument of Bhattatiri in resolving the Siva-Vishnu controversy is one way of doing it, provided it is accepted that it means also the acceptance of the right of another

sectary to use parallel theological arguments of an opposite nature to fortify his own faith. A better way, in the sense that it is less metaphysical and therefore more homely, is suggested in the following saying of Sri Ramakrishna: " A daughter-in-law in a household loves all the persons belonging to it and serves them. But her attitude of love towards her husband has got its own speciality and intensity. This should be the distinction in the attitude of one towards one's own faith and the faith of others. " Here healthy tolerance is preached on a universally understood emotional experience without the help of any abstract metaphysical principle.

The same arguments and considerations have to be extended to philosophical levels also to put an end to the acrimonious Dwaita-advaita controversy among Vedantins.

29. (c.91, v.1) It is generally said that in the following ten cantos, the devotee-poet is dealing with the matter contained in the 11th Skandha, the most philosophical portion of the Bhagavata. But this is not entirely correct. While much of it is based on the 11th Skandha (see Appendix III), he is doing here a much more difficult task than giving the substance of one Skandha. What he does, is to digest the whole Bhakti-cum-Jnana teaching of the *Bhagavata* gathered from all its Skandhas, recast it in the crucible of his genius, and present us an integrated gospel, the purport of which is that Bhakti is the one royal road to the spiritual *Summum-bonum;* that while the unity of the Jiva with the Supreme Spirit may be the ultimate goal, the same is not reached by anyone directly but only through the love and service of Him and the grace He bestows on the Jiva; and that for this reason Bhakti centring on a God of love is the only gospel that is of significance for man struggling in Samsara.

In this and the succeeding verses of the canto, a very condensed statement of the Bhagavata Dharma or the way of life of one practising Bhakti is given. For a detailed exposition of this theme, reference may be made to pp. xxxi of the Introduction. The progress of Bhakti to its highest level is briefly traced in the succeeding verses, and reference is made to the ideal of the Bhagavatottama (see Introduction pp. xxxvi).

30. (c.92, v.1) Reference is herein made to the Karmas (ritualistic action) inculcated by the Vedas. Vedic Karmas are broadly divided into Nitya-Karma, Naimittika-Karma and Kamya-Karma—i.e. those to be performed daily, those to be done occasionally, and those that are optional in nature to be done by persons who want special rewards here and heavenly felicities hereafter. By performing daily rites like Agnihotra, and occasional rites on full moon and new moon days, a ritualist does not gain any special material reward. They purify him and help his spiritual evolution. Their omission, however, will entail sin and suffering. Kamya-karmas are the Yagnas and Yagas, some of them meant for the individual's advantage and others for the good of

the world in general. Even these, if done without selfish desire but as offering to the Supreme Being, will result in spiritual purification and development. Most of these rituals are highly technical, take the form of fire sacrifices, are very expensive and time-consuming and confined to persons who are eligible for Vedic study. The sect of Vedic fundamentalists called the Purvamimamsakas hold that the inculcation of these rituals is the main function of the Vedas. They attach no importance to the worship of a Personal God with devotion, or to contemplation of an Impersonal Brahman. Reference in this verse is to performance of Vedic rituals without self-centred desires and in the spirit of an offering to God, which does not however find much place in the Mimamsaka's philosophy.

31. (c.92, v.2) What is referred to here as " another Karma-yoga " is the system of ritualism based on the Tantras or Agamas in contrast to pure Vedic ritualism upheld by the Purva-mimam-sakas. With the emergence of the various devotional cults like those of Vishnu, Siva, Shakti, Surya, Ganesh etc. rituals for the worship of these cult deities based on Agamas came into prominence. Some of the most important of these are the Pancharatra Agamas of the Vaishnavas, the Saiva Tantras of the Shaivas and the Shakta Tantras of the worshippers of Shakti. These constitute an extensive literature. While the Vedic rites were based on fire sacrifices and Vedic Mantras, and were meticulously ritual-bound, impersonal and non-devotional, the rituals of the Agamas introduced temple worship, image worship, a new kind of Mantras, personal deities, personal devotions and an appeal to a much larger circle of worshippers including those who were outside the Vedic pale. Today, this neo-Karma of the Agamas is more in vogue, Vedic ritualism having practically made a smooth exit. Even orthodox Vedists have for long learnt to live with this new ritualism which has been intrepreted and accepted as based on Vedas. But this was not so about a thousand years ago when Vedic ritualism was still a force in this country. The Vedic ritualists considered Tantrikas like the Pancharatrins as dangerous rivals and heretics, and they looked down upon any Brahmana following them only as a Vratya, a barbarian. Pancharatrins, however, claimed themselves to be orthodox followers of the Vedas, and there are still extant many writings of Vaishnavacharyas controverting the Mimamsakas and claiming for themselves equal orthodoxy with Mimamsakas. Sri Yamunacharya, a senior contemporary of Sri Ramanuja, has many such writings to his credit.

Here in the *Narayaneeyam*, Bhattatiri, who lived long after these controversies had died down and Agama rituals had been accepted in the Vedic fold, refers to it in a friendly way as ' the other Karma Yoga ' and gives preference to it, as it is easier and more suited to the practice of Bhakti. He points out the principal features of this system of worship. It is based on devotion to a Deity conceived as personal, loving and responsive. He is adored

and worshipped with various ingredients like flowers, perfumes, fruits etc, either as seated in the heart or as manifesting through an image. Worship of imges is the most important part of it. These images may be made of stone, wood, metal, sand, or they may consist of ritualistic drawings, consecrated spots or sacred emblems like Salagrama. An advanced devotee can conceive the Lord as seated in the heart, and offer worship mentally, the ingredients being his various faculties like the senses, Pranas, mental functions, various emotions, intelligence, egoism etc.

Image worship is considered a very essential discipline in these devotional cults, and in the nine limbs of devotion, it is an important item. It gives the sense-bound man a feeling of concreteness of the Divine and of the worship done to Him actually with one's hands. This practice is what has led the Hindu mind to recognise that the goal of religion is realisation.

32. (c.92, v.5) According to the Pouranika ideas, there are four ages—Krita, Treta, Dwapara and Kali. In these ages capacities and excellences of man degenerate stage by stage from their highest meridian in Krita to the lowest in Kali. According to the capacities of men in these ages, spiritual practices and religious duties are graded, and the easiest form of discipline is allotted to the age of Kali, as men's powers are very limited. So Kali, it is pointed out, though an evil age, has its advantage too, that being the easiness of the spiritual disciplines inculcated for this age. In the succeeding verses, the author refers to various symbols and easy practices through which men of the Kali age can attain salvation. Hence, it is argued that even Jivas born in other ages long for embodiment in Kali, and that those who, having got that opportunity, waste it in sensuous enjoyments, are pitiable indeed.

One may wonder from this whether meditation, practice of continence and other higher forms of Sadhana that are prescribed for Krita-yuga are toboo in our times. This wrong understanding can be avoided, if we take the four ages to mean the four stages of spiritual development observable even among men of today. The most evolved (pertaining to Krita) alone can practise meditation and absolute continence successfully, and so their Sadhana must be dominated by these. The next in evolution (Treta) are householders who practise partial continence and do disinterested work of service as worship of the Lord along with some meditation. The third type (Dwapara) follow devotional practices in which temple worship and devotional ritualism predominate. Lastly, there are the purely body-minded people who cannot fix their attention on anything abstract. So, while utilising temples and images for worship, they have to depend for their personal Sadhana more on loud chanting of the Divine Name alone or in congregation. The stimulation given by the Divine Name, when uttered with faith and fervour, will increase their devotion and make them eligible for higher Sadhana gradually. It is also good to remember that the

greatest spiritual geniuses like Sri Ramakrishna have, even in the most mature period of their spiritual life, engaged themselves in all these four forms of adoration — meditation, service, worship of images, and singing the Divine Name.

32. (c.92, v.7) The reference is to the *Bhagavata* verses 11.5. 38-40. It is maintained by critical students of the *Bhagavata* that this is a reference to the Alwar movement in Tamil Nadu which is assigned to the period from 4th to 8th century. On this evidence, it is maintained that the *Bhagavata* in its present form came into existence by about the 8th century and that some great South Indian devotee-scholar must have had much to do in giving it its final shape.

Here Bhattatiri claims that he has also the privilege of being born near one of those rivers mentioned, the westward flowing river, and, therefore, eligibility to have devotion, if the promise of the *Bhagavata* is true. Bhattatiri's house, Meppathur Illam, was near Tiruvavay, situated on the banks of the Bharata river, which flows from the Western Ghats westward to the sea. But it is held by many critical students today that the river referrred to in the *Bhagavata* is the Alway river, which is also called the Periyar, and is flowing about fifty miles south of the Bharata river.

33. (c.92, v.10) This is based on a famous *Bhagavata* verse 11.5-41: " He who has taken shelter with his entire being at the feet of the Lord, who is the one shelter for all,—he is no longer a debtor and no longer a slave to anyone, be it the Devas, Rishis, Pitris, relatives, fellow-human beings or sub-human beings." Man by birth has spiritual and social obligations to all these species of beings mentioned, and these are to be discharged by the performance of Pancha-maha-yajna (the five great sacrifices). These are: performance of Vedic fire sacrifice and other forms of worship, study of Vedas and other scriptures, performance of obsequies and begetting progeny to continue the line, doing one's social obligations to family, country and society at large, and being kind and considerate to sub-human creatures. Every man has these obligations, which are considered as debts he has to pay. But a sort of Debt-relief Act comes to be applied to a man who takes unreserved and whole-hearted shelter at the feet of God. He is free from all other obligations, so that he may devote himself entirely to God. The Lord takes up all his responsiblities. This is the faith of one following the path of exclusive devotion to Him. The chain of Karmic bondage with its self-generating and perpetual links of cause and effects cannot be broken, and will therefore continue to bind man, unless a sudden break to it takes place by the operation of Divine grace.

35. (c.49, v.2) Here the pure method of negation constituting the path of Jnana is described. The contact between the teacher and disciple ignites the fire of discriminative thinking (Jnana-vichara). Discriminative cogitation eliminates all presentations to

consciousness, including the cognitive and conative faculties and their functioning, as ephemeral and therefore unreal, and in the final act of negation, it subsides in its substraturn, there being nothing more to eliminate. This subsidence is compared to the forest fire, ignited by the initial lighting by friction, finally getting extinguished for want of any more fuel when the whole forest is burnt. Thought subsiding means that it ceases to take any forms or modes (Vrittis). This does not mean relapse into sleep; for sleep itself is a mental mode. Subsidence means subsistence as Pure Consciousness without the polarisation of subject and object, without conditioning by any objective modification. This attainment is possible only if there is absolute dispassion (Vairagya) and great power of inward concentration in the aspirant. As these are very rare to find, this path is considered very difficult and meant only for the select few. This is what is being stated from verse 6 onwards.

36. (c.94, v.5) The position of the pure Advaitism of the Sankara school is stated here. The theory of appearance (Mithyata) means that what is an appearance is not really there in the substratum. To recognise this is Knowledge. It is not gathering a new information or attaining to anything new, but recognising the real state of affairs by the elimination of all false notions through the discriminative process. Thus, the Atman is ever pure and unentangled, in spite of its seeming bondage. To recognise this is Knowledge. This kind of discipline is constitutionally impossible for most men, who cannot help feeling the reality of something which he experiences and which exercises a tremendous impact on him. As Sri Ramakrishna puts it, when you have a thorn in the flesh there is no use of denying the pain or the thorn. You will feel it, however much you may deny its existence by logical arguments. You have to take another thorn and remove it. And that second thorn is the path of devotion, and to this, the author reverts in the very next verse.

A philosopher may, however, retort that there being really no thorn within, the pain is illusory as in a hysterical patient. The devotee will reply to this that as far as he could see, the pain is not of his making but must be due to the will of a Power greater than himself, and that by the grace of that Power only the pain could be relieved, even if it be only an appearance or illusion. The operation of this Grace and the Sadhana pertaining to it, is the second thorn on which he depends. Without doing that, mere denial of the pain will be an exercise in futility. Hence the relevance of the path of devotion under all circumstances.

37. (c.94, v.5-6) So though accepting the theoretical validity of the path of knowledge leading to the state of a Jivanmukta, he feels convinced that the only practical way for him is the path of devotion, and refers here and in succeeding verses briefly, to the

nine-limbed discipline of devotion defined in the *Bhagavata* as "Hearing and singing about Vishnu, remembering Him, serving Him, worshipping Him, saluting Him, being his servant, loving Him, and making whole-hearted surrender unto Him. Practice of the devotion with nine limbs consists in this" (Bh. 7. 5. 23-4). This is called Bhagavata Dharma.

38. (c.94, v.7) While referring to the nine disciplines, attention is specially drawn in this to the most important antecedent condition under which Bhakti is generated and helped to develop. This is contact with persons in whom Bhakti burns as a passion of the soul. Such persons are called Sat-purushas, and only by contact with such burning lamps of Bhakti, our small wicks are lighted. Says the *Bhagavata:* " By closely associating with great devotees one happens to hear narratives and hymns dealing with My excellences. By observing them is generated in man faith in God and the spiritual path (Sraddha), delight in them (Rati), and deep-seated devotion to Him (Bhakti) step by step" (Bh.III 25.25). When faith is generated, a devotee takes initiation from a teacher and practises the nine disciplines. At this stage, the stimulation of external practices is necessary to keep up faith and engender the loving sentiment. Gradually love becomes an in-built sentiment without much of external stimulation, and develops into deep-rooted Prema-Bhakti. These are briefly referred to in these verses. Reference may be made to section V of the Introduction for more detailed information.

39. (c.95, v.3) Bhakti discipline is superior to the Jnana discipline because of its practicality and applicability to the vast majority of men. It is superior to the path of ritualistic Karma taught in the Vedas, because the felicities the latter bestow are temporary and therefore trivial while Bhakti is a direct path to Moksha. The path of concentration preached in the Yoga system can at best be only an aid, and so Bhakti is superior to it also. It is only through Bhakti that God's grace can be had, and it is only through His grace that illumination and emancipation can take place. Hence the superiority of Bhakti over Jnana.

40. (c.95, v.9) This meditation of the Lord's form is described also in Kapilopadesa in the Bhagavata (Bh. 3.28.21-33). In the 11th Skandha ch.14, in verses 36-46 also, it is briefly described. The concluding part of this section which indicates how the meditation on the Personal Form merges in the Impersonal, is very significant. It is as follows: " The bold aspirant, after withdrawing the mind from all external objects, should concentrate it on My total form. Next the mind that is spread in all the parts of My being, should be focused on one single part. He should concentrate only on my smiling face and eliminate every other movement of the mind. The mind so concentrated, should next think of Me as the Depth of Consciousness from which everything has had its origin. Leaving even this relational aspect, it should ascend to My Being as the unrelated Sat-Chit-Ananda. Such a seer sees himself

in Me, the Soul of all souls, indistinguishable like the light of a lamp that is engulfed in a transcendant light. "

41. (c.96, v.7) Here and in the verses preceding and succeeding is explained what is meant by saying that the path of Bhakti is most perferable. The reasons cited are: (1) It can be practised by persons who are neither intensely attached nor intensely dispassionate. The majority of aspirants come under this group. (2) It is sweet from the beginning and quick and direct in its result unlike the pursuit of the Impersonal Absolute through the study of the Upanishads and analysis of the self. Unless there is absolute renunciation, the latter never succeeds. Besides, it is hard intellectual labour, which, at least so far as those without great renunciation is concerned, is fruitless like pounding the chaff. (3) When a devotee approaches God in a personal relation, He also approaches the devotee in a corresponding way, whereas in the Jnana path, the aspirant stands on his own feet. The difference is brought out by the comparison between the safety of a child who is carried in his arms by the father and of another holding to the father's hand with his while negotiating a difficult path. (4) The grace of God is a positive factor in the life of a devotee. (5) Even if a Bhakta has a fall,the counter-attack of Bhakti defeats those adverse influences and leads to his spiritual elevation very soon (v.10).

For these reasons, it is pointed out that in the Puranas, Vyasa has especially advocated Bhakti and spoken little about the path of knowledge expounded in the Upanishads. But in spite of this, the poet-devotee rightly points out in this verse that it is necessary even for a Bhakta to have a general idea of Brahman as revealed in the Upanishads. The reason is that unless there is this element of philosophic understanding, the devotional attitude may degenerate into a narrow cult and fanaticism. God adored and loved by the devotee is the Supreme Person, but He is not an individual, unlike in our worldly experience where a person is always an individual distinguished from all others. An understanding of the Upanishadic doctrine of the Universal Brahman and identification with Him of the Personal God, worshipped and loved, will save one from this misunderstanding to which many devotees unconsciously succumb. The God of love is the Universal Person in whose being everything is included, and who reveals Himself in multifarious ways to aspirants He is the Unity that integrates and holds together in Himself all that exists. When the path of devotion is followed with this intellectual understanding as its background, it will not degenerate into a narrow cult or get vitiated by a fanatical outlook.

42. (c.98, v.1) In this and the succeeding verses of this canto and in the next canto (99) is stated that Upanishadic conception of Brahman which should form the intellectual background, referred to above. It is a grand topic fit to be meditated upon for safeguarding devotion from degeneration into fanaticism, or the Universal Being Vishnu, into narrow cult god. Most of the verses of

canto 99 are based on Rig Vedic Mantras, for which references are given in Appendix IV. A careful study of these verses will show that the author is wavering between the realistic Advaita, which can be only a version of Bhedabheda, and the solipsistic and acosmic type of Advaita according to which the universe, creation, and even God are mere appearances. Realistic Advaita takes God and creation as real and the Jiva is redeemed from the cycle of Samsara through spiritual practice and grace of God. Both Samsara and redemption are facts. Solipsistic Advaita looks on creation, Samsara and God as mere appearance, based on ignorance, which must necessarily have the self as the substratum. To rocognise the mere appearance status of these and their sublation thereby, is liberation or restoration to the original nature, which was always there but not recognised. In realistic Advaita, this awakening comes only through the grace of Iswara, and Iswara (God) is unsublatable. He only reveals his Impersonal aspect. Both the Impersonal and the Personal are equally real.

In such a view alone, can there be Bhakti in all stages of spiritual development, including the life of a liberated one (Jivanmukta). This seems to be the view advocated by the *Bhagavata*, where the highest Bhakti called Nirguna-bhakti is declared the fifth Purushartha rarer than Mukti itself. This seems to be the view expressed by Sri Ramakrishna also in his theory of Vijnana.

43. (c.98, v.6) Here God's grace is said to be responsible for converting Avidya into Vidya (ignorance into Knowledge). It means only that when God's grace operates, the hitherto closed eye of knowledge is opened, and He, the Sat-chid-ananda, who was till then behind the curtain, reveals Himself in and through the world of change and also as transcending the world of change. He by whose grace this transformation is effected cannot be said to be sublated. Rather He reveals Himself, in the words of Sri Ramakrishna, as both the Nitya (the Absolute) and the Leela (the sportive world of change). In this view, 'He' sublates the 'I' and not the 'I', 'Him'. The 'I' is viewed no longer in separation from Him but as included in His Being, just as the wave is in the ocean. Only in such a Bhedaabheda version of Advaita, is there place for Bhakti as an ultimate value and as a direct means of generating the supreme Knowledge. Solipsistic Vedanta which speaks of the 'I' as sublating everything including God, is the pure Jnana discipline, which is discarded in the *Narayaneeyam* as impracticable for a man following the path of devotion.

44. (c.99, v.3) Here and in the preceding and succeeding verses an uncompromising exhortation is made to spiritual aspirants to follow the path of devotion. Vedists who follow the ritualistic disciplines of the Veda, and the Vedantins who learn the knowledge philosophy of the Vedas and try to understand it merely intellectually without developing the capacity to put it into practice, are all exhorted to follow the path of Bhakti as the best and the most

natural spiritual discipline. The nine steps of the path of devotion and the topic of divine excellences to be contemplated upon are briefly referred to in these verses. Details about these nine steps are explained in the Introduction.

It is significant that in this and the earlier canto, a philosophic conception of Vishnu as the universal ground and creator, as the One being who manifests as the all without being affected by such manifestation, is expounded in very effective words and phrases, most of which have Vedic references (as given in Appendix IV). It is to be noted that this precedes the very personal description of the Divine as Krishna that is to come in the next and the last canto. But for this preceding philosophic statement, the personal description would have lost all its profound depth and become the glorification of an anthropomorphic cult-deity.

45. (c.99, v.9) The Bhedabheda view of Advaita of a Supreme Brahman manifesting as a real universe and yet remaining transcendent and unaffected by it because of His *mahima* (inconceivable uniqueness as the Supreme Spirit), is clearly stated here. This is the vision of the Achintya-bhedabheda form of Vedanta, which with some modifications forms the philosophic background of all Vaishnava or Bhakti interpretations of the Vedanta. This metaphysics alone can validate Bhakti both as a means and as an end.

46. (c.99, v.10) As a philosopher-devotee, Bhattatiri gives in this verse the philosophic background for the intensely personal form of the Deity which is the object of his adoration and of which he has a very vivid vision described so realistically in the next canto. He employs the figure of the ocean and its wavy surface, the latter standing for His formful aspect and the former for his impersonal and transcendent aspect. Just as the wavy surface is the ocean itself, so the Divine Form of Suddhasattva is nothing but He Himself. So, the love and worship of the formful is not the adoration of anything other than the Supreme Being Himself. The Formful and the Absolute are the obverse and reverse of the same coin, each giving significance and depth to the other. The innate predilection of the author for the Bhedabheda doctrine, as the only adequate basis for Bhakti, in spite of his occasional sallies into solipsistic Advaita, is seen in the fact that he makes use of this wave-ocean analogy, which is characteristic of Bhedabheda thought, both at the beginning of the work (c.1,v.4) as also at its close.

47. (c.100, v.10) The expression 'Ayurarogya-saukhyam' with which the *Narayaneeyam* ends is a code word according to Indian astronomical calculation. In addition to its obvious meaning 'Longevity, health and happiness,' it indicates the date of completion of the *Narayaneeyam* according to Kali Era. It is read as indicating the 27,12,200th day of Kali-yuga, which is supposed to have started from the time of Sri Krishna's demise, 5077 years+215

days before 1st Jan. 1976. The above Kali days converted into Christian era will give 27th Nov. 1587 according to some, or 23rd Sunday 1588 according to others, as the date of the completion of the composition of the *Narayaneeyam*.

APPENDIX I

1. TEMPLE OF GURUVAYOOR

The temple of Sri Krishna at Guruvayoor is situated about 25 km. to the north-west of the railway town of Trichur in Kerala State. It is perhaps the most noted temple in that part of India, and is today attracting very large numbers of pilgrims. Like all great temples, this one also has got its Sthala-purana or traditional account of origin, growth and greatness. A Sanskrit work named the *Guruvayu-pura-mahatmyam*, supposed to embody a conversation between sage Atreya and king Janamejaya, is the source of these. Much of the matter might be legendary, but they are very significant from a devotional point of view. Some of these traditions are therefore given below:

The image of the temple is said to be not of earthly origin. Originally, Mahavishnu gave this image made of a material called Patalasila to Brahma. Brahma gave it to a Rishi named Sutapas; he, to Kasyapa-Prajapati; and Kasyapa, to Vasudeva, the father of Sri Krishna. From his father Vasudeva, Sri Krishna got it, and it was installed and worshipped at His capital Dwaraka. Before the divine ascent of Krishna and the inundation of His capital city of Dwaraka, He instructed His devotee and minister, Uddhava, that this image would come floating after the sea engulfed Dwaraka. Uddhava was asked to communicate this to the Guru of the Gods, Brihaspati, and request him to install it in a suitable place so as to serve as a means for the spiritual uplift and salvation of man in the age of Kali. Brihaspati, the Deva-Guru, accordingly got possession of the image, and along with Vayu, the wind-god, whose help he sought, went all over the world to select a suitable spot, and finally, at the direction of Siva, installed it at a place in the coastal region of Kerala near ' Ambapura '. As the image was installed by Guru and Vayu together, the place came to be known as Guru-vayoor. Sri Krishna's demise is said to be the beginning of the Kali Era, which started 5077 years and 215 days before the commencement of the year 1976 A.D. As the temple installations was done soon after Sri Krishna's divine ascent, the temple must be considered 5077 years old according to this legendary history. As the image installed had its origin in Vaikuntha, the Abode of Vishnu, devotees began to look upon it as ' a Vaikuntha on the earth ' ((Bhuloka-Vaikuntha), and its reputation spread.

It is said that king Janamejaya, the grandson of the Pandavas, was afflicted with leprosy as a result of the curse of the serpents whom he destroyed in his Sarpa-satra (snake-sacrifice) to avenge the death of his father Parikshit by the bite of the serpent Takshaka.

He could get cured of it only after long years of worship of the Lord of Guruvayoor as advised by the sage Atreya.

The temple, which had thus its origin at the beginning of Kaliyuga more than 5077 years back, was renovated by a king of the Pandya land. Astrologers foretold this king that he would be bitten by a snake within ten months. Being a pious man, he spent this time undertaking a pilgrimage to holy places. Among the places he visited was Guruvayoor temple also. At the end of the period of ten months, he returned home hale and hearty and then took the astrologer to task for his false prediction. The astrologer told him that he would find the mark of snake bite on his left leg. He had escaped death only because he was at that time in a temple where Ananta, the king of serpents, was present and because he had also resolved then to rebuild that holy shrine. That holy place which helped the king to escape death, was Guruvayoor. Being Bhuloka-Vaikuntha, Adishesha or Ananta, the constant attendant of Vishnu, was present there. The Raja was convinced of the astrologer's verdict. Immediately, he carried out his resolve to build a good temple for the Deity at Guruvayoor. Thus a full-fledged temple came into existence (at some unknown date).

In course of time, this temple came to be downgraded and reduced to poverty during the days when Kerala was under the rule of the Perumals. The Perumal rulers, who were mostly Saivas, did not extend their patronage to this Vishnu temple. A Siva temple in the neighbouring village of Mamiyoor received their patronage, and with the shift of royal patronage, the worshippers also swung more to that Siva temple. The Krishna temple was thus reduced to utmost poverty, without means even to light the temple lamps. The evil days of the temple, however, came to an end in a mysterious way. A holy man one day went to the Mamiyoor Siva temple for food and hospitality for the night. Though the temple was affluent, the temple authorities pretended they had nothing and scornfully directed him to the neighbouring Guruvayoor temple, knowing full well about the utterly destitute condition of that temple. When the holy man entered the precincts of that temple, he was courteously received by a Brahmana boy and sumptuously fed. The holy man was very much pleased, and he pronounced a blessing. " I came here from Mamiyoor temple, because they said there is nothing there," he said. "They told me also that there is plenty here. Well, hereafter it will be exactly like that!" It is said that from that day, Mamiyoor Siva temple began to decline, and the fortunes of Guruvayoor Vishnu temple progressed from strength to strength.

Without any disparagement to the holy implications of the traditional account of the origin and rise of the temple, we shall now take a look at the same subject from the point of view of a modern historian. It is pointed out that the actual temple records date only from the 17th century, by which time, the temple had already

come into great prominence. We cannot therefore say anything about the antiquity of the temple from actual records or contemporary references. The earliest mention of many of the important Vishnu temples of Kerala is found in the songs of the Alwars, whose time was up to the 8th century. We find no mention of this temple in their songs, though they refer to many other Vishnu temples of Kerala. Nor does one find any reference to this temple in the many extant copper plates and stone engravings giving the lists of important temples of Kerala up to the 12th century.

An early 15th century poet in his work th *Kokasandesa* refers to a place called Kuruvayoor in the region of the present temple, but the temple itself, even if it did exist then, was not important enough to attract his attention; for he makes no mention of it in his references to all the important temples from Triprangad to Paravoor. It was 'Kuruvayoor' of the 15th century that was Sanskritised into Guruvayoor by bringing Guru and Vayu into the picture as founders of the temple. The earliest temple records date back only to the 17th century. So all that can be said with certainty now is that between the 12th and 17th century, a Vishnu temple grew into importance at the place formerly called Kuruvayoor and now known as Guruvayoor. By the beginning of the 18th century its importance had come to be widely felt, as it attracted the predatory attention of the Dutch in 1716 and of Tippu Sultan of Mysore in or about 1789. They both attacked, pillaged and burnt parts of the temple, prompted as much by their religious fanaticism as by their cupidity. The original image was, however, saved by the temple priests by shifting it to erstwhile Travancore territory at the time of Tippu's attack. It was brought back probably after or about Tippu's downfall in 1799. Since then, the temple steadily progressed, thanks to the faith and munificence of worshippers and the devoted work of some of its managers. Originally under the management of the Zamorin Rajas, it is now governed by a statutory body and has come to be recognised as one of the most noted temples in South India. A recent fire accident which destroyed some of the old wooden sections of the temple has evoked much sympathy in the minds of people and helped very much in attracting their interest and munificence in the service and reconstruction of the temple.

It is the view of competent historians that this originally unknown Vishnu temple was brought into limelight by five great saintly devotees, the accounts of whose life and mystic experiences woven round the Deity at Guruvayoor began to evoke the faith and adoration of an increasing number of worshippers. These five, who lived between the middle of the 16th and the end of the 17th centuries, are Vilwamangalam Swami, the woman saint Kurur Amma, Poonthanam Nampudiri, Zamorin Manavikrama Raja, and Narayana Bhattatiri. Of all these, Narayana Bhattatiri by his great poetical hymn, the *Narayaneeyam* and his remarkable re-

covery from a crippling paralysis, has immortalised the temple and spread its reputation as a great centre of worship. How Bhatatiri came to be closely associated with the temple is described in detail in the Introduction.

APPENDIX II

ANECDOTES ABOUT BHATTATIRI

1. Bhakti and Vibhakti

There are several anecdotes relating to Bhattatiri's life, some of them in connection with his composition of the *Narayaneeyam* and some with other periods of his life. The following is an anecdote about Bhattatiri's pride of learning being humbled by the Lord. What is given below is a prose translation of a Malayalam poem on the incident by Vallathol, one of the most illustrious Malayalam poets of the last generation in that language.

"It is half an hour since that solitary traveller ranging the skies has dived into the depths of the western sea. The goddess of dusk, dressed in her crimson robes, is yet to get ready to depart from the scene. She is probably lingering on to pay her respects at the feet of the Lord of Guruvayoor at the time of the waving of lights (Deeparadhana) at His vesper service. Inside the temple the brilliance of countless lights makes imperceptible the passage of the day into night. As if it were a Vaikuntha on earth, the precincts of the temple reverberate with the loud repetitions of 'Govinda, Hare, Krishna' and other sacred names of the Lord. The sweet strains of the Ashtapadi songs are now and then clearly audible through the resonant sound of drums and the enthusiastic chantings of divine names. In front of the sanctum sanctorum stand numerous devotees, with bated breath and hands held folded against the chest in adoration. Handsome women dressed in pure white are seen standing here and there like heavenly damsels, their luxuriant hair, yet wet after bath, flowing down and covering their waist as a thick mass of cloud covers the disk of the moon.

"The doors of the shrine swing open. Lo! there emerges a new world, resplendent with a spiritual lustre! Is it that the sun, the witness of all activities, has now risen in the west! Or is it that all the stars of the night have conglomerated in one place! Oh my eyes! Watch, watch unwinking that smiling face of Krishna, bedecked with sandal paste and crowned with a dazzling diadem, from which flows towards you the stream of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. On His chest, adorned with fresh and fragrant garlands, gleams a golden veil—is it a plate of gold or really Lakshmi, the lotus-born, clinging to his bosom!

All around spreads the inebriating aroma from the combination of the fragrance of burning frankincense and camphor with that of sweet-smelling flowers, causing horripilations of joy on the bodies of men, even like the thrills of joy that the grace of God generates in them. And the temple bells everywhere, awakened as it were by the pulls of devotees's hands, now begin to sing hallelujah to the Almighty with their ringing metallic notes caused by the movements of their pendulous tongues. Like the attendants of night, people linger on there to receive the consecrated water and flowers offered to the Lord.

"Coated with the silvery moon-shine, the temple quadrangle outside shines like the ocean of milk, with waves of milk-white clothes of circumambulating votaries fluttering in a gentle breeze. From among the Brahmana worshippers sitting in the meditation hall, out comes a Kerala-brahmana with a broad forehead, having visible marks thereon of his having received the Lord's grace through long and persistent adoration of Hari. He begins to go round the shrine in circumambulation, his lips always moving as he utters the holy names of the Lord. Following him close behind comes a simple-looking Nampudiri (a Kerala Brahmana), anxious to speak a few words to him. ' Honoured Sir, ' he says in low tones, ' I have got a *Kriti* (a literary composition)— nay, it is better to call it a *Vi-kriti* (a bundle of absurdities)—which, however, I crave you to correct. Though an immature writing, it will be somewhat presentable if ' *Patteri* ' goes through it. '

"Oh then! Is the personage in front *Bhattatiri*—the famous Narayana Bhattapada who with a flower offering of a thousand Sanskrit verses of unrivalled beauty conducted a worship of the Lord of Guruvayoor and attained to ' Longevity, Health and Joy ' by the Lord's grace! Is it to that supernal Sanskrit poet and scholar that this request to go through and correct a *vernacular* poem on Krishna is being made, though it be by Poontanam, the wonderful Kokila (cuckoo) that has warbled many a sweet song like the *Dawn of Knowledge* as an offering unto the Lord! Unthinkable and atrocious! In a tone of displeasure, Meppathur retorts, ' Begone with your *Vernacular* poem! You may show it to some-one else '. O Pride of Learning! hast thou cast thy evil shadow even on the lustre of same-sightedness of this devotee and knower of God? O Language of the gods! Does it befit thee to spurn and humiliate this daughter of Kerala (Kairali, or language of Kerala), humble-born though she be, in the manner thou hast done!

"The next moment Poonthanam disappears, deep-sunk in frustration and disappointment. But lo! Bhattatiri's ailment, which had abated, gets all of a sudden aggravated that very night. Tormented by cramps and unbearable pain, he rolls in his bed crying aloud, ' O Krishna, save me! ' Exhausted at length, he falls into a moment of sleep, when there rises before him a vision. Salutation to Thee, O Krishna! Thou the tender Child of Ambadi!

Is it verily Thou, with Thy crown of peacock feathers, yellow wearing cloth, belt of tinkling mini-bells, and small flute in hand, that appears in Bhattatiri's trance! Through the cadences of the enthralling music of the flute, Bhattatiri hears the commandment of the Divine Child: " Thou must perforce assuage the grief of that *vernacular* poet (Bhasha-kavi). There is no other medicine for thy ailment than the goodwill of that man. O Meppathur of world-wide fame! To Me the Bhakti (devotion) of Poontanam is far more pleasing than thy Vibhakti (grammar, scholarship)!"

2. Bhagavan the Lover of Devotees

Here is another anecdote about Bhattatiri getting a new revelation from the Lord: In canto 25 of the *Narayaneeyam* the Incarnation of the Lord as Man-Lion is described. If one reads it, one will feel that the poet is in full rapport with that terrific manifestation of the Divine. In concluding the section he addresses the Lord as " O Prahlada-priya! " (i.e. one to whom Prahlada is very dear). It is said that immediately he heard a disembodied voice coming from the sanctum sanctorum. It was the voice of the Lord declaring: " I am not merely Prahlada-priya, but Bhakta-priya (one to whom all devotees are dear)". This idea is corroborated in the *Bhagavata* 9.4.63 wherein, the Lord declares: " I am subject to my devotees, and am, as it were, without freedom (in relation to them). Being a lover of my devotees (*bhaktajana-priyah*) my heart is under the control of such holy men. "

3. Bhattatiri in a Dilemma

While Bhattatiri was spending his time in devotion at Guruvayoor, a worldly minded Nampudiri Brahmana approached him with a strange request. He had quarrelled with his mistress, and thought of effecting a reconciliation with her by presenting her with a highly complimentary verse expressive of his love. Though himself without any learning or poetical talents, he had the temerity to approach Bhattatiri with the request to compose such a verse for him, evidently with the idea of passing it on as his own. Bhattatiri, was in a fix. As a devotee he was bound not to prostitute the divine gift of poetical talents for such purposes as composing erotic verses, but at the same time he did not want to disappoint his friend who was in great distress. So, he composed the following verse with *double entendre*, apparently erotic but really deeply devotional. The verse is as follows:—

नारायणीया करुणा मनोज्ञा सैवार्थनीया सुरतोत्सुकानाम् ।
पुण्येन लभ्या यदि लभ्यते सा-वसुव्ययोऽप्युत्सव एव नृणाम् ॥

'The goodwill of Narayani (the name of the lady) is the one desirable thing which a love-lorn person should seek to obtain. Only by great good fortune can one have it. To obtain it, one will not consider even the expenditure of all one's wealth a misfortune!'

The real devotional import that the poet has in mind and which could be obtained by a little change in construing it is: "The quality of grace belonging to Narayana (the Supreme Being) is the most desirable objective. That alone is to be prayed for by those who aspire after Divinity. It is obtained only by one who has an abundance of good deeds to his credit. A devotee will joyfully sacrifice even his life to attain it."

4. All the World is a stage

One night, while Bhattatiri was staying at Guruvayoor, many of his friends started for seeing a Kathakali (a dance drama) in the neighbourhood. Bhattatiri stopped them and offered to show them the Kathakali there itself. This offer took the shape of the following verse:

यः कृत्वा विश्वरंगं रजनियवनिकं प्रोज्ज्वलद्भानुदीपं
शश्वत् सन्तुष्टसत्प्रेक्षकमखिलजगद्भ्रान्ति नाट्यं वितत्य ।
कर्मौघोच्चण्ड-मार्दङ्गिक-लयवशगान् वासनागानसक्तान्
जीवच्छात्रान् मुकुन्दः स्वयमभिरमते क्रीडयन् सोऽस्तु भूत्यै ॥

"This whole world is a stage. Night is the curtain. The bright sun is the stage light. The holy men who can stand aloof from it, poised in witness-consciousness, are the joyous spectators. The panorama of life's fictitious scenes is the action. The Lord of the Universe has put on this stage numerous Jivas as actors who are made to dance according to the drum-beat of Karma and the music of latent tendencies. May the Supreme Being who enjoys conducting this show, shower His benedictions on us!"

5. Mahabharata Reading

Another tradition, not associated with his life at Guruvayoor, centres on the great Krishna (Parthasarathi) temple at Ambalapuzha in erstwhile Travancore State. Deva-Narayana, the Raja of Ambalapuzha, having heard of the learning and devotion of Bhattatiri, had invited him to his capital. Bhattatiri went there incognito and was living in the temple at Ambalapuzha as one of the devotee Brahmanas doing Bhajanam in the temple.

Every day a Pandit used to read the *Mahabharata* in the Lord's presence in the temple, and the pious Raja also would be among the listeners. One day, the Pandit had to absent himself without

giving previous notice, and it looked as though the daily reading was going to have a break. To get out of this difficulty, the Raja asked his Personal Secretary to find out from the Brahmana devotees living in the temple one who could at least 'just read' Sanskrit. (The Malayalam word used was 'Kootti-Waayikkaan,' which means 'just read with effort' but can also mean 'improvise lines and verses when reading.') The Secretary found out a person from among them, and that happened to be none other than Narayana Bhattatiri living incognito. The portion to be read related to Bheemasena leading a determined attack against Karna in the great Mahabharata war. The Raja was astonished at the skill displayed by this unknown Brahmana in reading the text. As the reading progressed, the Raja, who was himself a Sanskritist and knew the Mahabharata thoroughly, was taken aback to hear the Brahmana reading a new verse that was not in the text but was none the less very appropriate to the context. The verse was as follows:

भीमसेनभयत्रस्ता दुर्योधनवरूथिनी ।

शिखा खार्वाटकस्येव कर्णमूलमुपाश्रिता ।।

It means: "The army of Duryodhana, shaken to the core by fear of Bheemasena, withdrew to the shelter of Karna, just as the hair of a bald-headed man withdraws towards the root of his ears (Karna)." It had an electric effect on the Raja, who grasped its humorous implication immediately. It was a witticism at his own expense. The Raja was stark bald, and had only a few hairs left just above his ears. The simile, making use of the double meaning of the word 'Karna' (meaning both the hero Karna, and the organ ear) was extremely appropriate in the context and sparkling with mischievous humour. The Raja, however, pointed out to the Brahmana, that such a verse was not in the text and asked why and wherefrom he had added it in his reading. The resourceful Brahmana quickly replied: "Kootti Waayichchathanu." As explained already, this expression in Malayalam has a double meaning, 'just read with difficulty' and 'improvise lines and verses'. The Raja at once understood that this joke also was directed at him with reference to the order he gave to his Secretary when he asked him to find a substitute reader.

Immediately, the thought flashed into his mind that this extraordinarily wise man must be Meppathur Bhattatiri, and he put the question directly to the Brahmana to know his identity. On receiving an affirmative reply, the Raja prostrated himself before him in reverence, and Bhattatiri pronounced his blessing on him in the form of the following profound verse with a double meaning:

अव्यञ्जनस्ताक्ष्र्यकेतुर्यत्पदं घटयिष्यति ।

तत् ते भवतु कल्पान्तं देवनारायणप्रभो ।।

Its obvious meaning is: " O King Devanarayana! May that eternal state of liberation which Mahavishnu (Tarkshyaketu) bestows on devotees, be yours for countless ages.' "

With a slight alteration in construing it, a different meaning can be derived. What is left in the expression 'Tarkshyaketuh' when it is made '*Avyanjana*' or without consonants, is '*Aayuh*' or longevity. So the verse means also " O King Devanarayana! May you be long-lived till the very end of time."

It is said that it was this Raja who, being impressed by the Bhattatiri's genius and remarkable mastery of Sanskrit grammar, induced him to write the grammar work the *Prakriya-sarvasva*.

6. At the Death-Bed of His Master

Another anecdote about Bhattatiri, with a note of pathos in it, is in connection with the passing away of his great Master Achyuta Pisharody (1624). Bhattatiri was by the side of his dying teacher. A master of all learning and a poet of no mean attainment, Pisharody recited an impromptu verse at the moment of his death:

काये सीदति कण्ठरोधिनि कफे कुण्ठे च वाणीपथे
जिह्मायां दृशि जीविते जिगमिषौ श्वासे शनैः शाम्यति ।
आगत्य स्वयमेव नः करुणया कात्यायनीकामुकः
कर्णे वर्णयताद् भवार्णवभयादुत्तारकं... ...(तारकम्) ॥

" My body is losing all vitality; my voice is getting choked with phlegm accumulating in the throat; my eye-sight is getting dim; and my breath is getting weaker as life is ebbing. O Lord Siva, the consort of Katyayani! Deign to impart in my ear that which liberates one from Samsara.... (the Taraka or the saving Mantra)"

Pisharody's voice failed by the time he finished the syllable 'Uttarakam.' It was left to Bhattatiri to complete it with the word, 'Taarakam' (meaning, the saving Mantra).

After his Master's death, Battatiri composed a verse as an elegy, reminiscent of the elegy in honour of another grammarian in Browning's 'Grammarian's funeral'. The irreparable loss to the world of scholarship by his death is herein bemoaned by the talented disciple of that encyclopaedic scholar, who was the master of Jyotisha, Ayurveda, literature and poetics and above all of grammar:

भ्रातर्ज्योतिषतन्त्र पर्यवसिता तिथ्यर्क्षयोस्ते कथा
धाष्टर्च्यैकप्रवणासि वैद्यसरणे नष्टोऽस्यलङ्कार भोः ।
हे शब्दागम निर्दयं विबुधतालुब्धैर्निपीडिष्यसे
"त्रिद्यात्मास्वरसर्प" दद्य भवतामाधारभूरच्युतः ॥

" O Science of Astrology! Your days are now at an end. O science of medicine! Your fate is in the hands of audacious pretenders. O Poetics! you are already dead. And O science of sound (grammar)! Your fate *will* be one of constant distortion at the hands of men of little learning. Such is the fate of you all after the demise of the great Achyuta, the one resting place for you all till this date (1624) ". It is pointed out that with a slight touch of pleasant conceit, he uses the future tense while speaking of grammar, indicating that there is no immediate danger for grammar, as he, the disciple of Pisarody in that subject, is still alive. It is also to be noted that the expression ' *Vidyatma svarasarpa*,' besides having its plain meaning, is also a code word implying the date of composition according to Kali Era. (*i.e.* 1624 A.D.)

APPENDIX III

1. References to Bhagavata 11th Canto.

The following is the result of attempts made by scholars to indentify the verses of the *Narayaneeyam* in this section with the verses of the 11th Skanda of the *Bhagavata*:

Narayaneeyam		Bhagavata 11th Canto	
Canto	*Verse*	*Chapter*	*Verse*
91	1	2	33–35
,,	2	,,	36
,,	3	,,	37
,,	5	,,	40
,,	6	,,	41
,,	7	,,	42–43
,,	8	,,	45–47
,,	10	3	1–42
92	1	,,	44–46
,,	2	,,	47–55
,,	3	5	4–5
,,	4	,,	7–10
,,	5	,,	21–33
,,	6	,,	36–38
,,	7	,,	39
,,	10	,,	41–42
93	1	7	6–12

Narayaneeyam		Bhagavata 11th Canto	
Canto	*Verse*	*Chapter*	*Verse*
93	2	7	21–23
,,	3	,,	37–42
,,	4	,,	44–51
,,	5	8	2–10
,,	6	,,	14–44
,,	7	9	3–15
,,	8	,,	21–25
,,	9	,,	26–27
,,	10	,,	28–29
94	1	10	1–11
,,	2	,,	12–15
,,	3	,,	18–29
,,	4	,,	30
,,	5	11	1–6
,,	6	,,	10–15
,,	7	,,	18–20
,,	8	,,	21–40
,,	9	,,	41–48
,,	10	12	1–15
95	1	,,	17–24
,,	2	13	8–28
,,	3	14	1–4
,,	4	,,	12–14
95	5	,,	18–19
,,	6	,,	22–26
,,	7	,,	32–37
,,	8	,,	38–41
,,	9	,,	43–44
,,	10	15	4–36
96	1, 2	16	
,,	3	17, 18	
,,	4	20	7–8
,,	5	,,	11–17
,,	6	,,	18–37
,,	9	23	
,,	10	26	
97	1–10	29	

The cantos 98 and 99 are not based on any definite verses of the 11th Skandha, but give a grand portrayal of the Supreme Personal-Impersonal Being whom the *Bhagavata* and all Vedantic Texts reveal to mankind. It is a unique description for use in contemplation. It also shows that Vishnu of the *Bhagavata* is not a narrow cult deity, but the supreme Personal-Impersonal Brahman. The verses of 99th canto are based on Rig Vedic Mantras. Reference may be made to Appendix IV for these Mantras.

APPENDIX IV

Rig Vedic References in Canto 99

The first 9 verses of this canto are splendid echoes of Vedic Mantras. Bhattatiri claims in the concluding verse of his magnum opus that his work is श्रुतिषु जनुषा स्फीतम् । It may be to substantiate this claim that these nine verses in the penultimate canto are woven out of Rigvedic Mantras.

1. विष्णोर्नु कं वीर्याणि प्रवोचं यः पार्थिवानि विममे रजांसि ।
यस्य त्रीपूर्णा मधुना पदान्यक्षीयमाणाः स्वधया मदन्ति ।
य उ त्रिधातु पृथिवीमुत द्यामेको दाधार भुवनानि विश्वा ॥
तदस्य प्रियमपि पाथो अश्यां नरो यत्र देवयवो मदन्ति ।
उरुक्रमस्य स हि बन्धुरित्था विष्णोः पदे परमे मध्व उत्सः ॥
(ऋ. अष्ट. 1, अ. 2, व. 24)

2. यः पूर्व्याय वेधसे नवीयसे सुमज्जानये विष्णवे ददाशति ।
यो जातमस्य महतो महि ब्रवत्सेदु श्रवोभियुज्यं चिदभ्यसत् ॥
(ऋ. अष्ट. 2, अ. 2, व. 26)

3. तमु स्तोतारः पूर्व्यं यथाविद ऋतस्य गर्भं जनुषा पिपर्तन ।
आस्य जानन्तो नाम चिद्विविक्तन महस्ते विष्णो सुमतिं भजामहे ।
(ऋ. अष्ट. 2, अ. 2, व. 26)

4. विष्णोः कर्माणि पश्यत यतो व्रतानि पस्पशे ।
इन्द्रस्य युज्यः सखा ॥
तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः ।
दिवीव चक्षुराततम् ॥
तद्विप्रासो विपन्यवो जागृवांसः समिन्वते ।
विष्णोर्यत् परमं पदम् ॥ (ऋ. अष्ट. 1, अ. 2, व. 7)

5. न ते विष्णो जायमानो न जातो देव महिम्नः परमन्तमाप ।
प्रतत्ते अद्य शिपिविष्ट नामार्यः शंसामि वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
तं त्वां गृणामि तवसमतव्यान् क्षयन्तमस्य रजसः पराके ॥
(ऋ. अष्ट. 5, अ. 6, व. 24, 25)

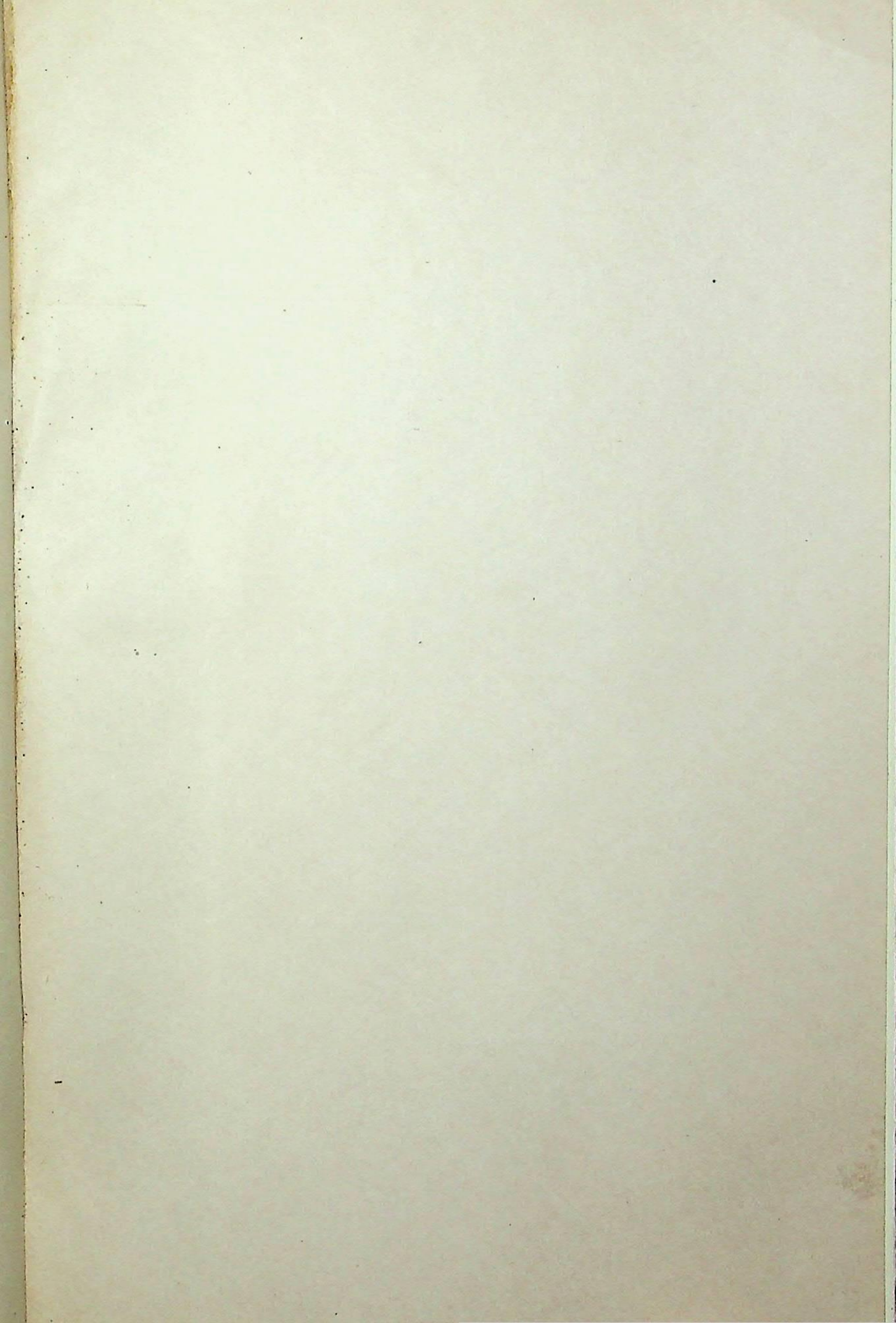
6. तमिद्गर्भं प्रथमं दध्र आपो यत्र देवाः समगच्छन्त विश्वे ।
अजस्य नाभावध्येकमर्पितं यस्मिन् विश्वानि भुवनानि तस्थुः ॥
(ऋ. अष्ट. 8, अ. 3, व. 17)

7. न तं विदाथ य इमा जजानान्यद्युष्माकमन्तरं बभूव ।
नीहारेण प्रावृत जल्प्या चासुतृप उक्थशासश्चरन्ति ॥
(ऋ. अष्ट. 8, अ. 3, व. 17)

8 सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वाऽत्यतिष्ठद्दशांगुलम् ॥
पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद् भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।
उतामृतत्वस्येशानः ॥
नीवारशूकवत्तन्वी पीता भास्वत्यणूपमा ।
तस्याः शिखाया मध्ये परमात्मा व्यवस्थितः ॥
(ऋ. X. 90)

9. एतावानस्य महिमाऽतो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः ।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥ (Ibid)

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